

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
Research Center in Anthropology,  
Folklore, and Linguistics

Bloomington, 1967

# THE KALMYK MONGOLS

A STUDY IN CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

*by Paula G. Rubel*



Published by Indiana University, Bloomington  
Mouton & Co., The Hague, The Netherlands

INDIANA UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

URALIC AND ALTAIC SERIES

Editor: Thomas A. Sebeok

Volume 64

Copyright ©1967 by Indiana University

All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 66-63901

All orders from the United States of America and from Canada should be addressed to the Director of Publications, Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics, Patton House, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Orders from all other countries should be sent to Mouton & Co., Publishers, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Printed in the United States of America.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	xiii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
PART I THE PAST .....	9
CHAPTER I HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....	11
CHAPTER II THE KALMYKS AS NOMADIC PASTORALISTS .....	25
The Setting .....	25
The People .....	26
Economy .....	28
Residence Unit .....	29
Housing .....	31
Domestic Sphere .....	32
Food .....	34
Clothing .....	35
Child-Rearing Practices .....	36
Health and Disease .....	37
Hospitality .....	38
Leisure Activities .....	40
Literature and Language .....	40
Religious Aspects .....	42
Socio-Political Sphere .....	57
CHAPTER III PERIOD OF TRANSITION .....	67
PART II THE PRESENT .....	77
CHAPTER IV THE KALMYK SOCIAL UNIT TODAY: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW .....	79
Introduction .....	79



The Setting . . . . .	79
The People . . . . .	81
Occupations . . . . .	83
Male . . . . .	83
Female . . . . .	86
The Residence Unit: Family Composition . .	87
Housing . . . . .	92
The Domestic Sphere: Family Life . . . . .	94
Home Finance . . . . .	98
Food and Diet . . . . .	100
Clothing . . . . .	101
Child-Rearing Practices . . . . .	101
Health and Disease . . . . .	105
Hospitality . . . . .	105
Leisure Activities . . . . .	107
Literature and Language . . . . .	108
Religious Aspects . . . . .	110
Political Sphere . . . . .	128
 CHAPTER V <u>TSAGAN SAR</u> . . . . .	 135
Introduction . . . . .	135
Historical Background . . . . .	137
The Institution Today . . . . .	141
Preparation . . . . .	141
Religious Aspects . . . . .	143
Secular Aspects . . . . .	147
 CHAPTER VI MARRIAGE . . . . .	 169
Introduction . . . . .	169
Historical Background . . . . .	169
Marriage Rites Today . . . . .	181
 CHAPTER VII SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE KALMYK SOCIAL UNIT . . . . .	 209
Concepts to be Utilized . . . . .	209
Historical Background . . . . .	210
Kalmyk Social Structure Today . . . . .	210
 CONCLUSION . . . . .	 237

## APPENDICES

A. CYCLE OF <u>TSAGAN SAR</u> VISITS, CIRCA 1905 . . . . .	248
B. CYCLE OF <u>TSAGAN SAR</u> VISITS, PRESENT DAY, Case Nos. 1-9 . . . . .	250
C. ACCOUNT OF A SHAMANISTIC CEREMONY AS RECORDED BY PALLAS . . . . .	265
D. ACCOUNT OF RITES ASSOCIATED WITH MARRIAGE AS RECORDED BY NEBOL'SIN . . . . .	267
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	273

## LIST OF PLATES

### Plate

1. Setting up camp (Pallas 1776 I:Plate I) . . . . .	27
2. Interior of tent, showing the woman of the household distilling <u>ärki</u> (Pallas 1776 I:Plate III) . . . . .	33
3. Interior of <u>Xurulin-örgë</u> , tent where religious services took place (Pallas 1776 II:Plate XIII) . . . . .	44
4. Procession during the celebration of <u>Zul</u> (Pallas 1776 II:Plate XVII) . . . . .	50
5. Kalmyk home in the final stages of completion, 1961 . . . . .	93
6. Interior of Temple, 1964 . . . . .	113
7. <u>Ürüs</u> celebration, 1961 . . . . .	117
8. Household <u>burxan</u> , 1965 . . . . .	127
9. Attendance at the Memorial Service for the late Dilowa Gegen Khutuktu, 1965 . . . . .	129

## LIST OF FIGURES

### Figure

1. List of <u>Otok</u> Recorded in Pallas (1776 I:221-222) (recording his spelling) . . . . .	61
2. Map of Freewood Acres, New Jersey . . . . .	82a
3. Household Composition . . . . .	89
4. Further Breakdown of 'Late Stem' . . . . .	89
5. Residence of Couples Married between 1957 and 1960 . . . . .	91
6. Categories of Relatives to whom the <u>xutsa</u> was Brought . . . . .	156
7. Genealogy of Household A . . . . .	159a
8. List of Wedding Gifts . . . . .	191
9. Kalmyk Mongol Kinship Terminology . . . . .	213
10. List of Buzāva (Don Kalmyk) <u>Yasn</u> . . . . .	223
11. List of Astrakhan (Torgūt-Dörbet) <u>Yasn</u> . . . . .	223
12. List of <u>Rod</u> in Khoshūt <u>Ulus</u> (Nebol'sin 1852) . . . . .	226
13. Proper Names of Units Recorded in the Literature . . . . .	227

FOR DAVID AND ERIKA

## PREFACE

This study is based upon a field investigation among the Kalmyk Mongol group in the United States undertaken by the author in 1960-1961 and supplemented by historical source materials consulted both in the United States and in the Soviet Union. The first stage of the field investigation involved a series of semi-weekly contacts with a Kalmyk informant conversant in both English and Kalmyk Mongol, during which time the author learned the rudiments of the language, no other means of language instruction being available at that time. During the latter part of this first stage, which extended over a period of four months, the author began to meet other members of the Kalmyk group and to participate in several large-scale gatherings. The author then moved to Freewood Acres, New Jersey, one of the two areas of concentration of Kalmyk population. She resided with a Kalmyk family and participated in the full round of life of the group for a period of seven months. Extended visits were also made during this period to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the other principal area of Kalmyk concentration. After leaving the field, the author made several visits to the group and still maintains contact with them.

One of the primary methods of obtaining data was through participant observation. Further, during the period of field investigation, the author came into direct contact at various rites and ceremonies with a sizeable proportion of the individuals comprising the Kalmyk group, gaining various types of information in varying degree from each. Detailed information on all aspects of life past and present was collected by means of informal interviews from the members of the household with whom the author resided and from some twelve others in New Jersey and Philadelphia with whom quite frequent contact was maintained. The individuals in these various households represented most of the spectrum of the Kalmyk group in the United States. They spanned four generations and included individuals from the two basic subdivisions of the group — Astrakhan and Buzāva, from the various tribal subdivisions as well as from the societies which support the three Lamaist Buddhist

religious establishments which have been set up. The author also collected several life histories on tape from individuals of varying age. Extensive genealogical data was also gathered enabling the placement of a sizeable proportion of the group within the context of one great genealogy connecting individuals by birth and marriage and giving additional insights into the structure of kin relationships.

As in all reports of field investigation, the greatest debt is always owed to the subjects of the study. Thus, I wish first to express my deep debt of gratitude to the Kalmyks whose interest, cooperation and warm hospitality made me feel as one of them. To the Urubshurows, my hosts during the field investigation, and to Mr. Noron Adianov for his aid in the early stages of my study of the Kalmyk language, a special debt of gratitude must be expressed. I wish to thank also Mr. John Hangin who enabled me to make my first contacts with the Kalmyk group and Dr. Fred Adelman whose insights as a result of his earlier contact with the Kalmyks were a valuable aid in my work.

I wish to thank Professor Morton H. Fried who first introduced me to the subject of Mongol culture and whose helpful criticism and suggestions during the course of the work were invaluable. I wish also to express my gratitude to Professors Arensberg and Wagley whose critical comments were of great assistance to me and to Dr. Joyce Riegelhaupt for her editorial assistance.

Last, but by no means least, I wish to thank my husband whose forbearance and invaluable editorial assistance greatly contributed to the final product.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to the National Institute of Mental Health, U.S. Public Health Service, for its continuing support during the field investigation and the subsequent analysis of the data (Public Health Service Research Grant No. M 4432, Fellowship No. MF 12, 967 and Small Grant No. MH-10502-01).

Paula G. Rubel

New York City  
September, 1966

## INTRODUCTION

Anthropologists, in their analyses of socio-cultural systems undergoing acculturation, have directed their attention primarily to the changes which are taking place. The earlier formulations of Linton and Herskovits focused on the importance of the historical documentation of the contact situation, the pre-existing culture and the Gestalt of trait movement, i. e., the innovators and their motives, the order of trait movement into the receiving culture and the details of the reception of new traits. A recent inventory of propositions concerned with culture change which has been abstracted from current empirical studies indicates that today many students of socio-cultural change are still, in the main, concerned with much the same consideration, though couched in somewhat different terms (Kushner et al 1962).

The exploratory formulations of the Social Science Research Council Seminar on Acculturation marked the beginning of a widening in scope to include such topics as the properties of socio-cultural systems which affect the course of their acculturation (including boundary maintenance), the nature of internal integration and the self-correction mechanisms. However, only brief consideration is given to reactive adaptation: 'the reinforcement and reaffirmation of native forms' (SSRC 1954:987). The focus remains primarily on that which is changing rather than on that which persists. If such acculturation sequences are to be of full value to us in understanding cultural dynamics, we must also thoroughly explore those traits and patterns which continue to be maintained despite the forces for change.

In terms of subject matter, the interest of American anthropologists traditionally has been focused upon primitive and folk societies as arenas of change and has not as yet widened to include, on an extensive basis, the study of the socio-cultural adjustments made by immigrant ethnic groups — this despite the fact that within recent years the validity and value of such studies has been reiterated (Spiro 1955:1248).

Sociologists, on the other hand, have maintained an interest in ethnic groups, though their interest has centered primarily on



the problems of absorption and assimilation, the factors that impede these processes — prejudice and discrimination — and the resultant minority group relations. Within the past few years, however, concern with the dynamics of assimilation and with the course and type of adaptation made by these groups has widened to include the maintenance and persistence of ethnic social units. The recent British studies of adaptation being made by the West Indian and East Indian immigrants in Great Britain are good examples of this trend (Patterson 1963, Desai 1963).

This study is an anthropological investigation of an immigrant ethnic group; one which, because of the nature of the group involved, has led to a consideration of socio-cultural maintenance and persistence. One of the most recent groups of immigrants to settle in the United States are the Kalmyk Mongols who, as displaced persons in the aftermath of World War II, were relocated here in the early 1950's. The socio-cultural adjustment of this ethnic group in the decade since their settlement in America, the nature of their life today and its relation to their past and the factors involved in the maintenance of the Kalmyks as a separate and viable social unit are the primary considerations of this study.

The settlement in the United States of this group with its colorful nomadic pastoral heritage climaxes an odyssey which had its beginnings in Central Asia during the seventeenth century. At that time, a number of tribes belonging to the western branch of Mongols known as the Oirat migrated permanently to the steppes north of the Caspian Sea, subsequently forming a separate people who became known as the Kalmyks. They remained nomadic pastoralists during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth marked the beginning of a shift to sedentary life and some crop cultivation but primary emphasis remained on their herds. During the chaos of the Russian Revolution, some of the Kalmyks fled from Russia to Yugoslavia and to Bulgaria, remaining there until the last months of World War II, when they moved into Germany to escape the conquering Russian armies. These Kalmyks form one component of the present Kalmyk group in the United States. The other component of this group left the Soviet Union in the wake of the retreating German armies during World War II. After the war, both components came together in neighboring displaced persons camps in western Germany to form the group which subsequently emigrated to the United States. Though buffeted by strong winds of history and of change, a recognizable and discrete

social unit — the Kalmyk Mongols — is being maintained in our midst. It is this unit which will be the focus of our investigation.

Numbering about one thousand, this group includes both family units and single individuals within a full range of ages. The oldest segment consists of individuals born in the Soviet Union, a large proportion of whom left Russia after the Revolution because they did not wish to live under Communist rule. They settled in the neighboring countries of Eastern Europe. The remainder of the group left Russia near the end of World War II. The middle age range is composed of the children of these earlier emigrants who were born, raised and schooled outside of Russia and those who were born and raised in Russia but who left or were forcibly evacuated as slave laborers by the Germans in the wake of their retreat. The youngest segment includes individuals born in Germany during their parents' long sojourn in displaced persons camps after the war and those born since the Kalmyk emigration to the United States. The group as a whole contains individuals from each of the various major tribal subgroupings. As we shall see, these affiliations operate in various situations. Recognition of various kinds of kinship affiliations within a broad range also is important, and serves to relate individuals and family units for a variety of purposes. Despite what might have constituted almost overwhelming divisive and disruptive factors, the group constitutes a functioning, identifiable, self-identified, socio-cultural unit in their present milieu.

The Kalmyk Mongol group in the United States at present forms a social unit distinct from its host society in cultural as well as in social terms.<sup>1</sup> On the cultural level, a body of distinctive traits and patterns is being maintained, the core of which can be identified as being distinctively Kalmyk by reference to the historical picture of their 'traditional' way of life. The Kalmyk Mongol language, the Lamaist Buddhist religion with its annual cycle of rituals and associated secular rites, and the rituals attendant upon the institution of marriage are some of the more important patterns that have been maintained. In many other spheres of life as diverse as food preparation and child-rearing the traditional patterns have also been maintained in varying degrees. A distinctive cultural heritage is being maintained despite Kalmyk participation in many of the national institutions of the American host culture. These include participation in economic and politico-administrative functions, and their adoption of major technological and other material and non-material traits from American culture.

Kalmyks at present characteristically appear to be opportunists in the selection and utilization of diverse culture traits. They readily adopt new traits which they see as desirable and easily incorporate them into the existing body of culture and just as readily discard old traits which they feel are no longer applicable to their life today. As we shall see, this is not done in a haphazard fashion, but rather within certain limits and in certain directions. Thus, their body of culture traits today, when compared with their traditional culture, consists of many patterns which appear as amalgams of traits obtained from several sources and surrounding a Kalmyk core. This amalgamation is accomplished by the Kalmyks with little concern for possible inconsistencies or the inappropriateness of combinations. As an example, at all Kalmyk weddings the bride wears a white wedding dress in the modern style while participating in the various traditional Kalmyk rites and ceremonies which take place on the 'wedding day', the day the bride moves to the house of her new husband. Once she arrives at the home of her new husband, she will change into the tseg'deg, the traditional dress for the married woman, and she will undo her hair which has been set in the latest fashion and have it tied into two plaits as is traditional for a Kalmyk bride after marriage.

In addition to the substitution and amalgamation of traits and, in a sense, underlying them, is the important principle of accommodation. By this we mean the acceptance or approval of adjustments and deletions in the details of a particular pattern when these are necessary, in order to fulfill a larger objective — the maintenance of a fundamental motif in Kalmyk life.

For example, if for some reason one is unable to make a necessary visit at the proper time, so long as he makes the visit at a later time and in doing so follows the basic forms, his visit is acceptable, the respect is acknowledged and the relationship is reinforced. Thus, when a death occurs in her natal family, a married woman is supposed to visit her natal relatives, bringing them meat on the 49th day after the death or soon thereafter. In an instance related by an informant, a relative in the informant's natal family lived at some distance from her and the informant had not formally visited the relative after the death of the informant's father. Several years later, the informant had occasion to visit this relative at which time the meat was brought and given to the relative. Since it was felt that the proper forms had been followed, this subsequent visit was acceptable. As the preceding example illustrates, the

material elements involved in a pattern are those which most frequently have undergone change. The following example will further illustrate this point.

Traditionally, at the time of marriage the relatives of a girl provided her with a tent, which was to be used as a residence for the new couple, in addition to various other items and animals. These were presented to her when she went to the camp of the groom where the couple traditionally resided after marriage. In America today, the Kalmyk bride is provided with a complete set of household furnishings, furniture for the living room, for the bedroom, for the dining room, and for the kitchen as well as other household goods. These will be used to furnish either the apartment where the couple will live after marriage, or, frequently, to furnish one or two rooms in the house of the groom's family where the new couple will live. Even during the period in the displaced persons camps where families and couples were assigned furnished rooms or portions of a room and where funds were very scarce, the bride's relatives managed to provide linen and clothing for the bride to take with her to her new husband. (In Chapter VI we shall see these principles played out in even greater detail in the other aspects of the institution of marriage.)

One does not have to reside long among the Kalmyks without noting that their social relationships are primarily with other Kalmyks. Whatever amalgam of culture traits — Russian, American, Eastern European and traditional Kalmyk — their present 'culture' has become, their existence as a bounded social entity distinct from the larger host society can be clearly demonstrated. From the point of view of social interaction, this unit appears as a network of interacting individuals and family units defined by boundaries of low frequency of interaction with the host culture and a low rate of intermarriage. The social interaction that does occur with the host culture is primarily a result of the necessary participation of the Kalmyks in economic and politico-administrative institutions.

The unit is defined by the boundaries of the social network.<sup>2</sup> It does not have a coinciding territorial dimension; that is, all of the units, families and individuals in the network do not live in a single territorially delimited area with physical boundaries. Rather, they live in groups of varying size interspersed among units of the host culture. This dispersion does not appear to affect their social interaction which is oriented primarily within their own group and

is at a low level with non-Kalmyks. Thus, when not involved in subsistence and other necessary endeavors, the Kalmyks will travel long distances to visit and interrelate with one another. During customarily defined periods of intensification of these relationships, individuals may travel many miles to complete the visits which they feel must be made in order to maintain and reinforce the social relationships which constitute their particular segment within the entire network which defines and integrates the group.

This perpetuation of the social network in the face of physical dispersion among peoples of different cultures is characteristic not only of their life in America today but was also characteristic of the life of the emigrant component living in eastern Europe during the period between the wars. Furthermore, informants who recall the period at the beginning of this century, after they had become sedentary, note that many Russians lived in residential units contiguous to the Kalmyks in the same village. This was true not only in the Don area where the Kalmyks traditionally had greater contact with the Russians but in the Astrakhan area as well. In either case, individuals in close social relationship were not always residentially contiguous.

An older male informant (Torgūt) recalls that many ethnic groups lived in his village but that those people with whom he had significant social relationships might live in other nearby villages or at greater distances. However, this did not deter frequent interaction.<sup>5</sup> Accounts of the traditional nomadic pastoral way of life note the dispersed nature of settlement and the isolation of the nomadic camp during part of the year with periods of coming together and intensification of social interaction — a pattern which, in general, parallels the social activity of the Kalmyks in the United States.

Group-wide activities periodically take place. These functions or ceremonies constitute ad hoc assemblages of individuals from all or most of the families which constitute the social network of the unit. Examples of these unit-wide activities are the festive ball held each year during the Tsagan Sar celebration (CHAPTER V), the occasional fund-raising functions sponsored by the societies which support the group's Buddhist religious establishments (CHAPTER IV), and weddings (CHAPTER VI). All provide occasions for the coming together of representatives of many if not most of the constituent families of the unit. At these times, social relationships across the unit as a whole are renewed and the common Kalmyk identity of the members is also, in a sense, reaffirmed.

The basic structural patterns characterizing this network of interacting individuals which constitutes the social unit have remained distinctively Kalmyk — distinctively kin oriented.<sup>4</sup> However, the cultural content, through which the social structure is expressed and in terms of which it operates, frequently consists of amalgams of traits from traditional Kalmyk culture and from one or more of the various cultures with which the unit has come into contact.

Thus, the Kalmyk Mongol group in the United States today constitutes a distinctive and recognizably separable ethnic unit with certain characteristics; a unit which appears at the present time to be maintaining and perpetuating itself despite continual impacts from other cultures, despite successive movements of its constituent units through different cultural milieu over a relatively short period of time, despite its status as a remnant and despite major changes in culture content.

This Kalmyk Mongol group holds a dual interest for social scientists. While there is general interest in the traditional patterns of the Kalmyks' way of life as representative of the nomadic pastoral societies of Central Asia, they have not been extensively treated in the anthropological literature of the western world, although substantial amount of material has been accumulated by Russian scholars and historians regarding these major groups of societies and their cultures.

By far the greater significance for our study is the question of the current socio-cultural adaptation of this remnant group, especially in the light of their traditional way of life and the historical exigencies of their settlement in the United States. What is the nature of this present adjustment? What aspects of the Kalmyks' way of life have survived their successive relocations and continue in the present milieu? What factors are involved in the Kalmyks' present maintenance of ethnic identity and separateness as a viable social unit? And, finally, what significance does this material hold for the broader framework of socio-cultural contact and culture-change studies and all that this framework comprises? These are the questions which will be explored and which will provide the focus for this study of the Kalmyk Mongols.

## NOTES

1. In the course of this study, we have found it useful to maintain the distinction between the social and cultural aspects of the

concrete phenomena — human behavior — which constitute our field of study. For our purposes, 'culture' refers to 'transmitted and created content and patterns of values and ideas and other symbolic-meaningful systems as factors in shaping of human behavior . . . and artifacts produced through behavior . . . (and) society or social system . . . to be used to designate the specifically relational systems of interaction among individuals or collectivities' (Parsons and Kroeber 1958, p. 582-3). The two are independently variable yet mutually interdependent factors.

2. The term network refers to the concept as used by Barnes (1954) — an image of a set of points (individuals or family units) which are joined by lines which indicate the interaction. In our case, however, the network does have boundaries, troughs of low interaction and some internal divisions which was not the case in Barnes' Norwegian example. A further point of Barnes' is also applicable; that is, the difference between the quality of the network in modern urban society as compared to simple primitive rural or small scale society. The mesh — that is, the distance around a hole is greater in the former than in the latter where links heading away from an ego will soon lead back within three or four links. The Kalmyks' network is characteristically like that of a simple small-scale society rather than of a modern urban society.

3. It is also interesting to observe that interaction, when it did take place with these Russian neighbors, was primarily in the economic area. According to informants, in the Don area Russians rented land from the Kalmyks, who did not farm but herded animals. The Kalmyks received a portion of the harvest as rent, and sometimes they help with the harvest.

4. A distinction is made here between the actual existing network of interacting individuals and the structural patterns which define the relationships between these interacting individuals. These, in turn, may be separated from the cultural content of the relationship.

## PART I THE PAST



## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

We have characterized the settlement of this remnant group of Kalmyk Mongols in the United States as climaxing an odyssey which had its beginnings in Central Asia. Let us, therefore, now return through time to where it all began — to the Oirat, later known as the Kalmyk tribes, who were the ancestors of the Kalmyk Mongols in the United States today — and briefly review this historical background.

The history of the Central Asian steppe peoples is an epical account of wars, empire building, conquest and periodic movements of peoples back and forth over the broad expanse of pastureland stretching from the Amur River in Eastern Asia westward to the Danube River.<sup>1</sup> The origins of the various linguistic and ethnic divisions inhabiting this area are unknown. It is thought that the ancestors of these Central Asian steppe peoples inhabited the Siberian woodland areas which border the steppe, and gradually began to move out onto the steppe proper sometime prior to the Christian Era. This movement was associated in general with the development of pastoral nomadism as an economic base (Bacon 1958:47).

The Kalmyks<sup>2</sup> as an historic entity derive from the western branch of the Mongolian speaking peoples of the steppe. The origin of this division between East and West Mongols and the early relationship between the two are unknown. According to the reports of Rashid al-Dīn, the medieval Arab historian, the Oirat or Western Mongols were distinct from the Eastern Mongols as early as the era of Chingis Khan in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Krader 1953:208.) The Western Mongols, themselves an internally fluid linguistic and regional division, became loosely subject to, though politically distinct from, the Mongol empire of Chingis and his successors. The disintegration of the empire began immediately after the death of Chingis as a result of the division of the empire among his several sons and the absence of a solid economic or cultural base which might

have given it more permanence, and culminated in the fall of the Yüan dynasty.

Out of the tribal wars and constant political realignments which subsequently occurred, three mutually hostile and internally divided groups emerged in opposition to one another and to the Chinese as well: the Northern Mongols (Khalkha) and the Southern Mongols (Chakhar) — together comprising the Eastern Mongol group — and the Western Mongols (Djungarian) (Riasanovsky 1929:9). The Western Mongols inhabited the steppe and river valleys between the northern T'ien Shan and the southern Altai ranges in what is now northern Sinkiang. Later, at the end of the fourteenth century, they formed an oirat (alliance), the chief members of which were the C'oros (Djungar), Torgüt, Xošüd and Xoit tribes. The union was formally known as the Dörben Oirat. This alliance under the leadership of the aggressive Xung-taiji or Khan Essen succeeded, in the beginning of the fifteenth century in subduing and unifying the whole of Mongolia and inflicting a series of defeats upon China itself. With the death of Essen, this alliance disintegrated and leadership again passed to the Eastern Mongols.

Strife and discord continued among the three main Mongolian groups during the succeeding centuries, and, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, efforts were made to revive the Oirat Alliance under the leadership of the Djungarian chiefs, Qaraqūla and Batūr. This was coincident with the Manchu expansion through conquest of the Ming empire and control of the Northern and Southern Mongol groups as tributaries. (The Oirat area of Djungaria had come under their domination by 1750.) During the rise of this second Oirat Alliance — a movement toward unity — there was at the same time an outward movement in the form of a migration of some Oirat groups from northeast Sinkiang. There appear to be two possible reasons for this outward movement — a protest against the increasing power of the Djungar nobles or overpopulation and the necessary search for new pastures (Riasanovsky 1929: 245). The latter seems to be the more probable since the Khans of the emigrating groups returned to Djungaria to participate in the congress in 1640 which drew up the code of law known as the Mongol-Oirat Regulations. At any rate, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, subtribes of the Xošüd and Torgüt divisions moved into the Tsaidam and Kökö-Nör regions of northwest Tibet. Close ties had been maintained between these tribes prior to this movement as a result of their early conversion to Lamaist Buddhism which had originated in Tibet. The second removal eventually led to the formation of the Volga Kalmyks.

This removal consisted of several western migrations over a period of a century and a half into southwestern Siberia and then onto the northern Caspian steppes within the broad expanse between the Ural and Volga Rivers. Interestingly, this was precisely the area into which the Russian Imperial Empire was also expanding. The first sizeable movement of Oirat peoples was led by Khō-Örlük who, with a major portion of the Torgūt tribe numbering 200,000, moved into southwestern Siberia about 1616, gradually moving westward and raiding Russian settlements en route. They occupied the lower Volga area about 1632 — subduing the various Tatar groups (Nogai, Kipchak and others) inhabiting the area.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently, the Torgūt were augmented periodically with Xoşūd, Dörbet and Xoit, many of whom were refugees from Manchu encroachments and conquests in Djungaria. The last of these groups arrived about 1760. They continued to occupy the Volga-Don triangle and the area east of the Volga for most of the eighteenth century. Some of these groups later moved further west into the portion of the Don Cossack area that lay between the Sal and Manych Rivers and into the area north of Stavropol' near the region of the Kuban' Cossacks.

During this early period of Kalmyk occupation of the Ponto-Caspian steppe, leadership continued to be vested in the line descending from Khō-Örlük (Torgut), though control of the various tribal groups constituting the Kalmyks varied in degree. Political relations with the Russians were intermittent and consisted of a series of oaths of allegiance by representatives of the Kalmyk Khan to the Russian Tsar, these being successively broken and reaffirmed. Raiding of Russian towns, villages and caravans continued. The Russian government was compelled to shut its eyes to these raids because of the remoteness of the steppe and the impossibility of sending the considerable force that would be necessary to pacify the area.

Furthermore, the Russians benefited from the Kalmyks' struggle with the Qazaq and Tatar groups which had previously harassed the frontier of Russia. The Kalmyks traded with the Russians on a routine seasonal basis — exchanging their livestock for luxury items. Though contacts with other nomadic tribes of this part of the Asian steppe, namely the Bashkirs, Qazaq, Kipchak, Nogai and other Tatar peoples, was at first hostile, trade relations with them were eventually developed in the bazaar towns. There was some intermarriage with Tatar and Qazaq and assimilation of whole Tatar families into Kalmyk social units (Adelman 1960:12). As some Kalmyk groups moved into the southwestern part of the

area, they also came into contact with the north Caucasus people of the Circassian, Chechen (Terek River region) and Kumyk tribes.

Despite the distance and difficulty involved in maintaining contact, ties with their eastern brethren were sustained. The Kalmyk Khan, Khō-Örlük, and his son were signatories to the Mongol-Oirat Regulations of 1640 which were subsequently adapted to conditions on the Kalmyk steppe. The conversion of the Kalmyk aristocracy and, later, of all the people to Lamaist Buddhism of the Gelugpa (Yellow Cap) sect which had occurred prior to their first westward movement, and their continued endorsement of these religious institutions further supported this eastern orientation. The Kalmyk clergy continued to look to Tibet for leadership, many receiving advanced education in Tibetan or Mongolian lamaseries.<sup>4</sup>

The Khan Ayuka, whose reign lasted for over fifty years until 1724, was recognized by the rulers of China as well as by Peter the Great as a great Kalmyk leader and unifier. The close of his reign marked the end of true Kalmyk political independence and the beginning of a politically turbulent half century characterized by the Russian government's increased participation in Kalmyk affairs and ending in the return of a majority of the Kalmyks to Djungaria. At first, the Russian government appropriated to itself the right to confirm the Khan and the lieutenants of the Khanate, then to appoint them (Riasanovsky 1929:247). A council (zarga) was set up with three members appointed by the Khan and five by the princes (noyon) and clergy. All decisions were ultimately subject to the approval of the Russian government. The Russians also established military settlements on the banks of the Volga and Terek Rivers. Rumors were spread to the effect that the Kalmyks were to be made sedentary agriculturalists on permanent military call. The discontent came to a climax when, under the incitement of Tsebek Dordji, a third cousin of the Khan who secretly aspired to a higher position of leadership, and the Supreme Lama of the Torgūt, the reigning Khan Ubashi was persuaded to sever his relations with the Russians and to lead his people back to their original homeland in Djungaria. On a propitious date, set by the Dalai Lama himself, January 5, 1771, these secret plans came to fruition and all Kalmyks except those on the west bank of the Volga began the long and disastrous trek back to their original homeland.<sup>5</sup>

Dissatisfaction still beset those Kalmyks who remained. Many of the Torgūt joined in the Cossack rebellion under the 'False Tsar' Pugachëv, which swept from the Ukraine to the Urals in

1773. Catherine the Great, in reprisal for this support, deprived the Torgūt of the office of the Khanate and vested it in the Dörbet tribe.

The exodus decimated many of the tribal units, causing a series of major divisions and realignments. The Xoşūd continued to occupy the Volga basin meadowland; the Xoit remnant merged with the Torgūt, still the numerically superior group; the Dörbet in the westernmost portion of the steppe, who had remained as a body, were divided and dispersed. One Dörbet group had been sent, as previously indicated, to the Don in the 1730's to reinforce the Cossacks there. The remaining Dörbet on the Kalmyk steppe divided into the Baga Dörbet (Little Dörbet) in the western Kalmyk steppe proper and the Ike Dörbet (Great Dörbet) which moved south into the northern part of Stavropol' Province.

In 1798, the Dörbet in the Don Cossack host were officially incorporated into the Cossack province which henceforth imposed military service on them. This provoked the migration of many of these Kalmyks back to the territory of the Baga Dörbet which, in time, became numerically larger than the Ike Dörbet. The Don Cossack Dörbet became known as the Buzāva (the name is said to derive from the name which the Dörbet gave to the Donets River). This group became separate from the rest of the Kalmyk units — at first only territorially but later by intervening Russian settlements as well. In time, this separation between the Buzāva and the other Kalmyk groups became the basis for a differentiation in sentiment as well as in cultural characteristics, including a dialectal difference. The Great Dörbet, being in a territory adjacent to the Kalmyk steppe, continued to retain feelings of filiation with the other members of the Dörbet tribe and the other tribes of the steppe. Xoşūd and Torgūt. This held true despite the differentiation from the main Dörbet group due to the earlier introduction of agriculture and closer proximity to Slavic agricultural colonists.

During the period after 1771, the Russians succeeded in a further political integration of the Kalmyks into their empire. The Vice Khan, appointed by the Russian government, was the supreme leader, the khanship having been abolished by the Russians as a punishment for the exodus in 1771. The Kalmyks were subordinated successively to different Russian governmental ministries. Russian governmental supervision continued to penetrate the native political structure at successively lower levels. Administratively, the Kalmyk political structure was fitted more closely to the prevailing Russian governmental structure, the princes (noyon or rulers) being regarded and referred to in government documents

as 'owners' of their territories while those under their jurisdiction were referred to as serfs.<sup>6</sup> When noble families died out, the Russian government appointed Russian officials as Public Guardians (Riasanovsky 1929:255).

The period after 1771 was also marked by the inception of change in the economic, traditionally nomadic pastoral sphere of life. Extreme climatic conditions during the nineteenth century decimated the herds of many Kalmyks and forced some of them to seek permanent employment as herdsmen in the Ukraine or in the fisheries of the Caspian Sea. 'This was significant change, for traditionally during periods of economic dislocation, the impoverished attached themselves to more prosperous encampments, whereas other alternatives within the alien culture were now being utilized' (Adelman 1960:17). The numbers of Slavic agricultural colonists also increased during this period — particularly after 1860 and the abrogation of serfdom — resulting in land pressures within this area. Successive governmental regulations in the form of Homestead Acts restricting land usage by the Kalmyks were put into effect. This was coupled with a progressive increase in population and a general decrease in herd strength. A program had been instituted in the mid-nineteenth century to encourage the Kalmyks in the Kalmyk steppe to become sedentary agriculturalists. They were offered subsidies and land parcels, but without success. The few that did accept, rented their land to Russian peasants and continued to follow their traditional mode of livelihood. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, sporadic agriculture was practiced in the western part of the Kalmyk steppe by Little Dörbet elements, but at the time of the Revolution, Kalmyks within this area were farming the land one year and abandoning it for herding the next (Krader 1953:222).

At the same time (late nineteenth century), the Stavropol' and Buzāva or Don Kalmyks began to undergo a marked transition to a more sedentary life and a combination of pastoralism and agriculture. Although these areas with their heavier Slavic concentrations could have supported both herding and crop cultivation as full-time occupations, because of the advantageous ecological situation, the transition did take place and without the type of extensive support and encouragement that the government gave in the area of the Kalmyk steppe proper (Krader 1953:221). Closer proximity to the Slavic population together with the recognition of agricultural enterprise as an alternative source of income brought this transition about. An increased knowledge of vegetable gardening and poultry keeping gained from Slavic contacts was also put to use.

An elderly Buzāva informant described to the author the manner in which her father let out a parcel of his land to some Russians who cultivated wheat on the plot in return for one-half of the harvest. A kitchen garden was also maintained near the house, but the primary emphasis was still on animals. Herds continued to be moved periodically within the available area though only for very short distances. At first, people lived in their felt yurts or nomadic tents in spring, summer, and fall, moving into sod houses located nearby in the late fall and remaining there all winter. Gradually, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the yurts were abandoned entirely for sod dwellings. This occurred within the lifetime of elderly informants who still recall the move to the tent when they were very young.

Among the Buzāva, the political unit encompassing several nomadic camps, the aimak (aməG), became affixed to a particular territory and was transformed into an area containing one or more small hamlets.<sup>7</sup> Administratively, the aimak became a stanitsa — the smallest political unit in the Russian administrative system of that area — having the constitution of a Cossack village and both a Kalmyk and a Russian name. The Buzāva and the Stavropol' Kalmyks, as a consequence of their more diversified economic base, became wealthier than the nomadic Kalmyks of the Kalmyk steppe or Astrakhan area. One Dörbet informant told the author that when he was very young his father moved the family into the Don area to try to improve the family fortunes. He also cited two other Dörbets now residing in America whose families had also made such a move.

With this diversification in the economic base and, more importantly, with the difference in the quantity and quality of the contact with the Russian host culture, the bifurcation between those of the Don area and the rest of the Kalmyks was furthered, continuing to the present time and providing one of the bases of alignment found within the group in the United States. This can be seen in the dialectal differentiation in Buzāva speech which utilizes many Russian suffix forms and contains more Russian loan words than the speech of the Astrakhan and Stavropol' groups. Further, the Astrakhan consider themselves to be the real Kalmyks and regard the Buzāva as more Russianized; while the Buzāva consider themselves to be more civilized than the Astrakhan. Russian formal education (a Kalmyk parochial primary school education was a prerequisite and also served as a counterforce, particularly among the Buzāva who could more easily afford it), was

one of the principal means by which Russian culture was disseminated. 'Its acceptance among the Kalmyks resulted in the formation of a native intelligentsia, loyal to the Russian monarchy, possessed of Russian values and bent on introducing the best of Russian culture to the basic Kalmyk population and serving as liaison in the best interests of their people.' (Adelman 1960:21).<sup>8</sup> However, though many Russian cultural items were introduced, preservation of the Kalmyk identity was still a positive value even among those disseminators of Russian culture, the educated elite, who sought to preserve Kalmyk culture, by their participation in a secular renewal or revitalization (as documented in Adelman 1960).

The Russian Revolution in 1917 brought about further changes. According to informants most Kalmyks, particularly among the Buzāva, continued their allegiance to the Tsar. Many showed their support by joining the White Army of General Denikin which operated in the Don-Volga region during the period of civil war which followed the Revolution. In the chaotic period after the defeat of this army, close to 2,000 Kalmyks, largely Buzāva, along with other Russian nationals fled from Russia by way of the Black Sea ports. After debarking in Turkey, they traveled to Yugoslavia and Bulgaria and some further dispersed into Czechoslovakia and France. Later, several hundred returned to Russia under Soviet amnesty.

The political status of these emigrés during the period between the world wars was as stateless persons; they did not become citizens of the nations in which they resided.<sup>9</sup> They supported themselves by sewing clothing on a piece-work basis in homes or as carters or at some other small trade. Despite their small numbers and physical dispersion, they maintained themselves in separate social units within these various countries, continuing their religious practices and establishing temples where possible. They continued a great many of their traditional culture practices, including use of the Kalmyk language. They set up 'Sunday Schools' for their children where the priests taught them the few prayers which had been translated from Tibetan into Kalmyk as well as other aspects of the religion. They maintained the yearly cycle of religious holidays, taking advantage of any occasion for social interaction with one another to overcome their physical dispersion. Though they sent their children to the local public schools, spoke the local language and adopted various other cultural traits



from the hosts such as food, folk songs and dance, they retained their Kalmyk identity.

Those Kalmyks remaining in the Astrakhan area were incorporated into an Autonomous Oblast in 1920. Many of the Buzāva moved into this oblast, while those who chose to remain near the Don became part of the Rostov Oblast. Census figures of 1926 place the Kalmyk population of the U.S.S.R. at that time at 129,321 (as compared with the figure of 190,648 from the census of 1915) (Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet MVD 1916:71, Tsentral'noe Statisticheskoe Upravlenie SSSR 1929:8). In 1929, collectivization was instituted and the herds and livestock of the wealthy were confiscated. A second government drive for collectivization occurred in 1931. Poorer families were required to settle on collectives or were 'starved out', this period being referred to by one informant as the 'hungry days'. Wealthy families were deported to camps near Sverdlovsk east of the Urals. In 1936, the Oblast became the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic with its capital at Elistā.

Part of the Republic was overrun during the German invasion of Russia in World War II. When the Germans retreated from this area in 1943, many Kalmyks were compelled to join the retreat as forced laborers. Some went voluntarily in order to escape from 'a life under communism'. According to informants, about five thousand Kalmyks fled the U.S.S.R. at this time. Soon after the German retreat, the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was abolished along with the administrative units of the Ingush, Chechen, Balkar, Karachay and Crimean Tatars, on charges of collaboration with the Germans (Shabad 1951: 54). The entire Kalmyk population was moved to Siberia and their land was divided among newly formed and older oblasts. The Kalmyk population in the area was replaced largely by Ukrainians. However, after 1958, part of this Kalmyk group which had been decimated by the cruel trek and the difficult living conditions in Siberia were permitted to return to their homeland. Several Kalmyks in America have, in the last few years, received letters from relatives who have returned to the Astrakhan area from Siberia. The new Kalmyk A.S.S.R., according to the 1959 census, has a Kalmyk population of 65,822; only 35.1% of the Republic's population; the remaining elements being mainly Russian and Ukrainian. The rest of the Kalmyk population in the U.S.S.R., an additional 40,184 resides in the Russian S.F.S.R. (Tsentral'noe Statisticheskoe Upravlenie S.S.S.R. 1959: 186, 194, 200, 202, 203).<sup>10</sup>

Toward the end of the war, most of those Kalmyks living in the Balkans moved into Germany. Many went voluntarily, signing labor contracts in fear of Russian conquest of their area. Others were forcibly moved to Germany as slave laborers to keep the German war machine going. After the war, these Kalmyks from the U.S.S.R. were united with those who had lived outside of Russia between the wars (the latter are frequently referred to as 'old emigres') in displaced persons camps near Munich and eventually numbered 850. Between 1948 and 1951 there were several abortive attempts on the part of a Kalmyk committee and several American social service organizations working with the International Refugee Organization to arrange resettlement of the Kalmyks. After fruitless attempts at resettlement in Thailand, France, Madagascar, Paraguay and Ceylon, the International Refugee Organization made a special grant to several social service groups, notably the Tolstoy Foundation and the Church World Service, on behalf of the Kalmyks, to jointly sponsor efforts to help them find a home. In July 1951, the United States Attorney-General ruled that the Kalmyks were eligible for admission to the United States. Between December 1951 and March 1952 571 Kalmyks arrived here, additional families and individuals arriving latter.<sup>11</sup> After a period of processing and orientation at one of the reception centers set up for them in Baltimore, Maryland or Vineland, New Jersey, they settled (after an unsuccessful attempt to relocate some members of the group in New Mexico in a small crossroads community near Lakewood, New Jersey known as Freewood Acres and in a section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Smaller groups of individuals also settled in New Brunswick and in Peterson, New Jersey and near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.<sup>12</sup> There are now approximately one thousand Kalmyks in the United States, of which 300 are from the Astrakhan area — primarily Dörbet with a few Torgūt — and the remainder are Buzāva.

## NOTES

1. This brief history has been compiled from general sources, including Bretschneider (1910), Riasanovsky (1929, 1937), Baddeley (1919), Howorth (1976-80), and Wu (1941).

2. The name 'Kalmyk' has been subject to varying interpretations by scholars. Many writers believe it derives from the Turkish word 'Kalmak' which means to remain, and refers to those Kalmyks remaining behind in Russia after the great re-emigration to Central Asia in 1771. Recently, two new explanations have come to the author's attention. One, from Dilowa Gegen Khutuktu, a Khalkha Mongol, has been accepted by some Kalmyk intellectuals. (Personal Communication: Professor Arash Bormanshinow) This definition indicates that 'Kalmyk' means 'spreading out' and refers to that branch of the Oirat which expanded and spread to the west. A further explanation, based on etymological analysis, indicates that the word refers to the great carts which were used to bear the yurt, the nomadic tent, from one place to another (Menges 1955:327-334). Howorth (1880 I:49) sees the word as used by the Moslems to refer to the fur cap or *kalpak* which was worn by the Kalmyks; and Georgi (1780 IV:6) supplies the meaning — those who have revolted. The name also appears much earlier during the Middle Ages in the work of the Arab geographer, Ibn al-Wardī (1349) and later in the work of Abū al Ghāzī Bahadur Khan (seventeenth century) (Bretschneider 1910:II: 167), but there is no evidence that these refer to the same group.

3. The precise year of the Kalmyk movement into Russia is a matter of dispute. Prof. Bormanshinow (Private Communication) furnishes the year 1598 for reports of Kalmyks in western Siberia. Pal'mov (1926:1-2) notes the appearance of a Kalmyk mission in Moscow in 1608. In 1613, the Kalmyks were reported in the vicinity of the Emba River south of the Urals by a Russian mission to Persia under Tikhnov.

4. This feeling of affinity continued through the centuries though varying in its intensity and is felt among the Kalmyk group in the United States today. Several of the priests here obtained advanced ecclesiastical degrees in Tibet prior to or in the early days of the Russian Revolution. The Buddhist temples which have been established in the United States are dedicated to the Dalai Lama and are under his suzerainty. Members of the Dalai Lama's family who have visited the Kalmyks here have been treated with the utmost respect and deference. The recognized and greatly revered ecclesiastical leader of the religious hierarchy in the United States, until his death in 1965, was himself a Khutuktu, a

Living Buddha from Outer Mongolia (Khalkha). Secularly, a feeling of affinity with other Asian Mongolians is sometimes expressed on the part of Kalmyks here, often through the medium of Pan-Mongolism. Hence, despite the firm feeling of anti-communism felt by the Kalmyks, pleasure was expressed by a few individuals at the admission of Outer Mongolia to the United Nations despite the fact that its government is communist. It is felt that this is long overdue recognition of Mongolia as a nation. There are also sustained contacts with the few Mongolians in the United States from various parts of Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. They are invited to and participate in various group events. Contacts are also maintained with the representatives of the Chinese Nationalist Government in Taiwan, particularly with the representative of the Bureau of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs. These individuals are also invited to ceremonials and, for example, were present at the memorial service and luncheon in honor of the Dilwa Gegen Khutukhu (April 11, 1965) attended by the author.

5. The reason given for the inability of the remaining camps on the west bank to take part in the emigration was the partial but not complete freezing of the Volga River which prevented them from moving their herds. But it appears that some (Dörbet) did not want to take part in the migration for fear of domination by Tsebek Dorji. River and de Quincy describe the misery and disaster of this trek (River 1939, de Quincy 1862).

6. The documentation, being wholly from the Russian point of view, makes it impossible to tell from the available literature how the relationships and the political structure really were constituted and operated. Furthermore, documents which are available on the earlier periods utilized Russian translations of earlier, now unavailable original documents, making analysis of structures in these periods extremely hazardous.

7. Henceforth, the alternative spellings which appear in parenthesis are those employed by Ramstedt (1935).

8. Consult Adelman (1960:22-30) for further information on education of the Kalmyks and its effects in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

9. Some eastern European countries did not permit them, as Russian citizens, to change their citizenship. In other instances, the Kalmyks themselves did not wish to renounce their Russian citizenship as they felt that one day they might return to Russia.

10. According to the census of 1959, of the 106,066 Kalmyks in the U.S.S.R., 25,434 are classed as city people and 80,632 as rural.

11. Approximately three hundred Kalmyks still remain in Germany, principally those unable to emigrate for health or other reasons.

12. The Kalmyks originally were to be resettled as a group in New Mexico after a brief period of orientation in Maryland. However, the sudden increase in the rate of arrivals necessitated the opening of another reception center in New Jersey. Those processed in New Jersey learned of opportunities in the East and refused to settle in the West, and, with the assistance of various social agencies, employment and housing were found for some in Philadelphia. Others were settled on nearby chicken farms and soon moved into the surrounding area. Many settled in the vicinity of Freewood Acres where there was already a sizeable Slavic population whose leadership both aided the Kalmyks and exploited them to some extent. Those hundred Kalmyks who were sent west had many problems of adjustment. These difficulties, coupled with letters from the east encouraging them to return, resulted in a decision by the group to return to the east where they were assisted by those Kalmyks in New Jersey in finding housing and employment in their area. (From Church World Service files on the resettlement of the Kalmyks.)

## CHAPTER II

### THE KALMYK MONGOLS AS NOMADIC PASTORALISTS.

The present way of life of the Kalmyk Mongols who have settled in the United States appears, at first glance, to bear little resemblance to what we might imagine to be a nomadic pastoral existence. However, in order to adequately judge whether or not there has been a continuity of basic sociocultural patterns, we must first determine what the Kalmyks 'traditional' nomadic pastoral life was like. This picture will then serve as the background to our survey of the present patterns of this remnant group and as a yardstick for our assessment of the changes that have occurred.<sup>1</sup>

What were the 'traditional' patterns of Kalmyk society? An examination of the historical material relating specifically to the ancestors of the Kalmyks, which date as far back as the fifteenth century law code, the Tsādžin Bitšiq, indicates a general continuity and stabilization of their nomadic pastoral existence.<sup>2</sup> The exodus in 1771 of a major portion of the Kalmyk population back to Djungaria in a sense marked a turning point. Henceforth, Russian contact gradually increased resulting, in time, in changes in various spheres of life: changes and realignments in political structure and greater Russian involvement in that political structure; increased contacts with Russian culture and subsequent changes in the economic sphere. Therefore to provide us with a general picture of the 'traditional' Kalmyk way of life, we will utilize the several extant historico-ethnographic sources from the latter part of the eighteenth century including the accounts of Pallas (1771, 1776), Georgi (1776-80), Bergmann (1804) and Lepekhin (1774).

#### The Setting

The Kalmyks, it will be recalled, migrated in several waves into the area of the Ponto-Caspian steppe during the seventeenth century. Until 1771, they occupied the area of the Caspian plain in the west between the lower Volga and Kuma Rivers and, in the east, between the lower Volga and the Ural Rivers. Following the great exodus of 1771, only the western area continued to be occupied by the Kalmyks. This area is a combination of steppe-desert and

desert, with true steppe conditions in the river basins and to the west in the region of Stavropol (Krader 1963:119).

The pattern of nomadic movement reflected climatic and geographic conditions. During the winter, the southern areas were preferred. There, snow cover, if any, was light, permitting the animals to find food (Pallas 1776 I:122). Areas of reeds and rushes were usually selected because they afforded protection from the winds and storms. Here the snow could be raked away and the dry pasture residue used for the cattle. In May and early June, the grass dried in this southern area and the herds were moved north. The various ulus —the large-scale nomadic unit ruled by a prince — had their own designated territories including specific winter and summer pastures. Though the specific territories involved changed after 1771, this basic pattern of movement between winter and summer pastures persisted to the 20th century. Accounts record entire Kalmyk ulus moving together to a new pasture 10 to 15 times a year. (See Plate 1) (Pallas 1776 I:124, Georgi 1776:410.) Movements were more extensive in the fall and spring than in the summer and winter, the winter camp being a center of annual concentration to the extent that nomads have such centers (Krader 1963:121).

### The People

Both Pallas and Bergmann describe the physical characteristics of the Kalmyks of their day. These descriptions in general depict a somewhat short, muscular people, dark-haired with typical Mongoloid countenances (Pallas 1776 I:100, Bergmann 1804).

These observers were also concerned with the Kalmyks' 'turn of mind as well' (Pallas 1776 I:102). Keeping in mind the 'set' of our observers, it is still interesting to note their recognition of the Kalmyks' sharpness of mind and natural ability; their ease at learning languages; their inquisitiveness, sharpness of eye, courage and fortitude; their sociability and friendliness to all and their hospitable nature. Pallas states that, 'they would be easy to civilize and cultivate if their vivacity and way of life did not lay in the way' (1776 I:103). Their 'faults of character' were considered to be cunningness, inclination to drink and idleness (Pallas 1776 I:102-4, Bergmann 1803 II:281).



Plate 1



## Economy

'The riches and substance of the Kalmyks are their herds' (Pallas 1776 I:116). Herds were counted in the hundreds and thousands of animals. Pallas records that a man could not subsist without owning at least ten cows, a steer, eight mares and a stallion. Those who did not have sufficient animals had a miserable existence. They sometimes tended the herds of the rich, and those in dire need sold themselves to noble Kalmyks as slaves. Horses, cattle and particularly sheep constituted the preponderant portion of the herds. The proportions of these different kinds of livestock were in general in accord with those found in other herding economies. Camels, 'because they required much care, were slow in their development and had a low reproductive rate, constituted only a small percentage of the herds and were the property only of the rich and the clergy' (Pallas 1776 I:116). There were also goats, but they were few in number (Pallas 1776 I:120).

As is usual in pastoral economies, the animals were put to every possible use. Sheep's wool was made into felt, their skins were used to make household items, and tallow was made from their fat, and when their milk was used, it was only to make cheese. Cows were valued more for their milk which was made into butter, cheese or wine, and less for their skins; camels were utilized for their milk, which was usually used in tea, and for their wool as well as for a means of transportation; horses were valued for milk and also as a means of transportation.

In addition to the activities normally connected with a nomadic pastoral existence, there were individuals among the Kalmyks who pursued specialized crafts. These included the smiths who forged small weapons, knives and household and other necessary implements from iron. There were also a few silversmiths who manufactured women's jewelry — earrings, bracelets and necklaces, small offering cups, holy water containers, figures of gods and boxes of silver, copper or brass. These men also did a type of damascene work — applying silverplate to raw iron with a hammer. Other such specialists were the carpenters and turners who made wooden vessels and basins and the wickerwork to be used for the tents. Gunstocks and wooden saddles were also made by them; the latter sometimes were sold in the Russian markets (Pallas 1776 I:145-147). Unfortunately, there is no record of which of the other manufactured products reached the Russian market. Nor is there any information concerning the manner in which these goods were bought, sold and traded among the Kalmyks themselves.

Trade with the Russians was a factor in the Kalmyk economy, whose importance continued to grow as contact increased. The primary products traded by the Kalmyks were animals and skins. Pallas records that 'when they came near to a town or met merchants, they would exchange cattle and the sundry overflow of their industry for manufactured cloth of all kinds, tobacco (used by both men and women), tea, groats and meal' (1776 I:127). That trade was of importance in the Kalmyk economy is substantiated by the fact that each ulus (large-scale nomadic unit) had a market master (Boodotshi [sic]) in the neighboring Russian towns. It was a minor position and was generally given to an impoverished relative of an official. The market master received a small maintenance in payment for his services. All Kalmyks coming from the ulus to sell animals, skins or other items in that town had to present themselves to the market master, and for each animal, each saddle, each piece of felt or skin or whatever they had brought they received a fixed sum of money (Pallas 1776 I:192). It is interesting to note that this arrangement permitted Kalmyk-Russian trade to take place but reduced the frequency of direct contact between Kalmyk and Russian.

#### Residence Unit

The basic social, economic, political, kin as well as residential unit was the nomadic camp — the xoton. It was composed of several agnatically related families 'descending one from another by means of the growth of separate generations of relatives' who nomadized as a single unit over a particular territory or a common pasture (Leontovich 1879:175). It consisted of several kibitkas, or circular felt tents, which were the universal mode of habitation on the steppe. The great kibitka or örgē (ger) housed the most senior couple of the unit and was the focal point of the xoton. It had in earlier times housed the single hearthstone of the xoton and was still the focus of primary domestic activity. Here were to be found the common stores of the xoton and the common 'kettle' from which all the members of the xoton ate if their number was not too large. The other kibitkas, referred to as xoš, housed the sons and their families and other relatives. Married sons and adult unmarried daughters were always given separate kibitkas.

Traditionally and ideally, the xoton contained four to five generations; that is, great grandfather, grandfather, father, sons and grandsons, but in reality the composition was probably somewhat

more variable (Leontovich 1879:175; 1880:186; Nebol'sin 1852:7; Kostenkov 1870:32). Leadership of the xoton was vested in the most senior relative, 'the main elder of the family from whom all the rest of the members of the xoton were descended' (Leontovich 1880:191). He was the master and the manager of the xoton and directed its various activities, and the rest of the members treated him with unquestioned obedience. Punishment was meted out for insults and injuries to him and to other senior relatives (Statute No. 17, Leontovich 1879:31). He was the main representative of the xoton.

However, the senior female was not without rights or powers. She alone had influence with her husband concerning proposed marriages of their children. She directed the domestic activities and she was consulted on other xoton activities (Leontovich 1880:194). The subordinates of the household consisted of children, distant relatives, nephews, brides and grandchildren (Leontovich 1880:195). Apparently, there was no individual property within the xoton, for the taking of property from close relatives who were members of the xoton was not considered theft and was not penalized (Statute No. 135, Leontovich 1879: 135). There was said to be no inheritance of property unless it involved separation from the xoton (Leontovich 1880:204).<sup>3</sup>

The family was considered as a single legal unit having collective responsibility. Relatives in the xoton were responsible as a unit for the crimes committed by any member. As an example, if the head of a xoton was proven guilty of treachery, the xoton was broken up and he and his entire family were killed (Leontovich 1880:204). According to the first Tsādžin Bitšiq, a son, on reaching majority, might separate from the xoton after requesting and receiving a portion of the flock (his inheritance) and then move off and form an independent camp, swearing his allegiance to the reigning prince (Riasanovsky 1929:70). This right to move off from the xoton continued despite prohibitions in later law codes which forbade movement from the large-scale nomadic administrative units. Since each nomadic camp paid a separate tribute and duty, it was in the interest of the leaders of the larger units to have such divisions, thereby multiplying their revenues (Leontovich 1880:200).

Characteristically the moving off of people from the nomadic camp was a result of the natural growth of families and the pressing need for pasturage (Leontovich 1880:204).

Though the aim was to keep the unit together as long as possible, intra-family disputes, population growth and land pressures must surely have combined to result in the moving off of families or portions of families, particularly in the earlier period when land was plentiful. When the senior male died, the eldest son inherited the position of head of the unit. It is understandable that the younger sons, recognizing that unless they moved off and established their own camps they would always be subordinate to their oldest brother, demanded a portion of the herd from their father who might perhaps give them a more equal share than their brother after the father's death.

The nomadic camp which constituted the prince's court was extensive in size and in elaborateness. There were numerous tents for sleeping, for cooking and storage and for public meetings. This camp moved far less frequently, than the average camp since it was separate from the prince's main herds (Bergmann 1804:II:104). Only minimum herds needed for food and transportation were kept at court.

The nomadic camps of the clergy were also extensive and included tents for the storage of religious paraphernalia, for religious services and the various ranks of clerical personnel. The camp of a high lama was frequently as elaborate as that of a prince. Often the tents of the clergy were attached to and formed a part of a prince's court.

### Housing

The traditional Kalmyk habitation was the ger or nomadic tent. It had a round base which consisted of a framework of four, six or eight pieces of wooden lattice work which were bound together with leather thongs. This base was covered with felt and topped by a round, funnel-shaped, felt-covered roof with a smoke hole at the apex which could be covered when necessary. The door opening in the base was covered with a hanging. The tent was roomy, warm in winter and had the strength to withstand storms. Its sides could be left uncovered in the summer for coolness. It could be assembled and disassembled in a short space of time. (See Plate 1) There were several Kalmyk terms for the tent depending upon who occupied it. Ger referred to the tent of a married couple of non-princely status; ōrgē usually referred to the tent of a high priest or prince or a tent which served for public meetings; and xoś referred to the tent used by unmarried males or females (Pallas 1776 I:111, Bergmann 1804 II:83).

The interior furnishings of the ger were simple, in keeping with nomadic life (See Plate 2). In the center was a fireplace with a three-legged iron stand on which food was cooked in iron vessels. Nobles did not cook in their tents but had separate cooking tents. They kept barrels of sour milk in this central location instead of cooking vessels. The bedding of the head of the household was located opposite the doorway of the tent. It consisted of cushions and pillows placed on thick felt. The well-to-do had pillows and head cushions of morocco leather or cloth filled with wool or feathers and a linen curtain hanging before the bed. They also had felt carpets on the floor. At the head of the bed were chests for clothing and other possessions. If the household was wealthy enough to possess religious figures, the receptacles for these figures were kept at the left of the tent entrance or at the head of the bed on top of stacked chests and sacks. Brass offering cups (zogoza [sic]) with water, milk or food were also placed here, and in the ground nearby was a stick topped with a large iron cup into which libations were placed daily. On festival days, the religious figures were placed here and lamps or incense candles lighted before them.

To the left of the doorway was the 'honored place' — the seating and sleeping place for guests. Unmarried sons and daughters also slept here if they did not have separate xoš. Here hung the rifle, the cooker and the bow. Saddles were hung nearer to the doorway. On the right side were hung the large skin bags for milk and the other necessary household utensils. The latter included wooden dishes, meat troughs, dippers, platters, leather drinking cups and basins, leather bags and tubing for making brandy from milk, milking pots and other containers. A large tea barrel (zorchozar [sic]) and a narrow cylindrical wooden tea pot also stood here as well as the iron spoon with the long handle which was used to make butter, milk or 'milk branch' warm. (Pallas 1776 I: 114-115) Variations in household appointments between rich and poor were qualitative as well as quantitative.

### Domestic Sphere

The domestic sphere was primarily the realm of the women of the household. They were concerned with the preparation of food and drink, the milking of cows, the making of clothing and the assembly and disassembly of the tent each time the nomadic encampment moved. They were also involved in the manufacture of felt for the tent covering and also for pillows, raincoats, carpets



and covers. They were engaged in the tanning and manufacture of leather articles. The senior woman directed these various domestic activities and was also consulted on other matters, including the proposed marriages of her children. The men, in addition to their main occupations of driving, guarding, watering and protecting the herds and of protecting their families, helped their wives with various household chores when time permitted. They helped pack up the tent when it was time for the camp to move, they gathered firewood, slaughtered cattle, cut up meat, mended the tent or plaited cord from animal hair when necessary (Pallas 1776: 142, Bergmann 1804 II: 153).

Food. Meat was a general and universal food; 'they never lose their taste for it' (Pallas 1776 I: 128). The Kalmyks ate the meat of the various animals constituting their herds as well as the meat of the wild animals inhabiting the area such as the otter, marmot, ground squirrel, beaver, wild pig, wild horse, steppe goat, fox and wolf which they hunted. The average Kalmyk (according to Pallas) was somewhat reluctant to slaughter animals because of the Buddhist tenet which made it sinful to kill a living thing. Nevertheless, preying animals were killed out of fear and to prevent thefts from the herds. Animals incapacitated by wounds or non-contagious diseases were eaten (Pallas 1776 I: 128). At times, animals (usually sheep) were slaughtered for food, though the wealthier Kalmyks also slaughtered horses and cattle (Bergmann 1804 II: 122).

Meat was not eaten raw. Normally it was cooked in water without salt, the resulting broth then being thickened with meal or groats. On trips, when no wooden vessels were at hand, the meat was roasted on a spit. When there was a surplus of meat, e.g., a sick animal had to be slaughtered, the surplus was cut into small strips and dried in the open air or smoked. The stomachs of the animals were cleaned, inflated, dried and used as milk vessels. The blood was cooked and eaten as a dainty (Pallas 1776 I: 128-129).

Meal, in addition to being mixed with broth to form meal pap (budān), was also made into disk-like, whorl-shaped or pea-shaped cakes (borts'k). Bread was sometimes purchased in neighboring cities or sometimes baked by the Kalmyks themselves.<sup>4</sup> The roots of certain plants available in the Volga river valley were dried, crushed into meal (resembling rye meal) and used by the poorer Kalmyks to make bread. A store of these roots was gathered in the winter for use during the year. Various wild roots and plant stalks were gathered on the steppe and used for flavoring purposes. Poorer people, as a rule, ate more vegetables while the rich ate

more meat. Melons and other fruits and vegetables such as cucumbers, peas and kale, obtained from their grain-growing neighbors, were welcome additions to the diet when available (Pallas 1776 I: 117, Bergmann 1804 II: 117-8, 187).

Milk — mare's milk as well as cow's milk — was also important in the Kalmyk diet. All milk was cooked soon after the milking and then placed in large leather containers to sour. It was never drunk uncooked. All soured milk was referred to inclusively as tšigēn: soured mare's milk — suma tšigēn, soured cow's milk — ārag, and soured mare's and cow's milk mixed — bastrak. In the summer, when there was an abundance of milk, some cow's milk was set aside and distilled to make an alcoholic drink referred to as ārki. Sometimes the residue of the distillation was mixed with fresh milk, cooked until thick and placed into sacks to make cheese. Milk was also made into butter (Pallas 1776 I: 132-7).

Kalmyk tea, sometimes referred to as the national drink, was another staple of the diet. The tea most frequently used was the so-called brick tea imported from China by the Russians and sold to the Kalmyks. To the tea and water were added milk — preferably camel's milk, butter and salt. Since tea was scarce, the leaves were used several times. If imported tea was not available, the dried leaves of a particular type of cabbage were sometimes substituted.

The wealthy sometimes were able to purchase rice and used it to cook pilaf which was also an important ceremonial dish (Bergmann 1804 II: 117).

Kalmyks customarily ate twice daily, in the early morning and in the evening. A religious offering was always placed in the offering cup before taking nourishment, and, in the morning before tea, a short prayer was recited (Bergmann 1804 II: 144). Pallas notes that when food was plentiful, the surplus was used for informal banqueting, resulting in alternating days of hunger and over-eating (1776 I: 131).

Clothing. Verbal descriptions as well as pictures are available to depict the traditional male and female dress of the Kalmyks (See Plates 1, 2, 3). The men wore calf-length wide coats with wide sleeves made of silk or cotton (labtshik, [sic] Pallas) over lighter underclothing (bišmēd) made of cotton or damask. This underclothing included a long garment with narrow sleeves, open in the front and reaching to the knee and trousers of linen or cotton for the rich and leather for the poor. The former was buttoned and tied by means of a sash which contained a tobacco pouch, a fire flint and a knife. In summer, the outer coat was discarded, while



in winter an additional fur coat was added. The wealthier Kalmyks used lamb skins or the skins of young colts for these coats, while poorer individuals used the pelts from sheep or steppe goats. During the rainy autumn, a wide overcoat of thick grey cloth or felt was worn over all other garments. The customary colors for male clothing were yellow, russet, dark blue or grey; priests wore clothing of yellow, brown, purple or red.

Kalmyk women also wore wide trousers, a shirt buttoned in the front with a clasp at the neck and over these a dress similar to the male bišmēt but longer, of lighter and better material and with the fastening at the side. When going out, the women wore long over-vests or jumper-like garments without collars or sleeves called tseg'deg. This garment was always made of the very best material that they could afford and was highly decorated. In winter, a long garment of silk-covered skins, without sleeves was worn over the tseg'deg. Unmarried girls wore clothing similar to male attire but made of lighter, more dainty materials. Their hair was worn in a single braid until marriage, when, as part of the marriage ceremony, it was replaited into two braids to signify their new marital state. Women wore earrings and finger and hair ornaments.

Both men and women wore wide boots with heels made of black leather or of red morocco for the rich. They seldom bought European stockings but wrapped their feet in material before putting on their boots. In summer, the poorer Kalmyks went barefoot. (Pallas 1776 I:106-109, Bergmann 1804 II:60).

Though not explicitly stated, it appears from the sources that all this clothing was made by the females of the household as part of their domestic duties. Fabrics, on occasion even leather, were trade goods (Pallas 1776 I:109).

Child-Rearing Practices. Families included three, four or more children. Women were attended by midwives at birth, with the father and other males assisting during labor up to the moment of birth. During the latter part of labor and the actual birth, the woman was in a sitting position at the foot of the bed with her hands holding onto a stake. Several days after the birth, the naming and baptism took place (the details will be discussed in the section on religion since the clergy took an active part in this rite de passage). For three weeks after birth, the woman was considered unclean and remained isolated from the men of the household. She remained in bed for one to seven days following the delivery. The prescribed diet during this time consisted of small portions of sheep meat and large amounts of meat broth. Ordinarily, women

breast-fed their children, though nobles sometimes employed wet nurses. Pallas notes that children were breast-fed until the next confinement. He observed children of four and five still being breast-fed. Bergmann, on the other hand, states that children were weaned in their first and second years. (Pallas 1776 I:164-166, Bergmann 1804:216).

A child's education was, in the main, at first left to nature; 'they grew as would plants guided by their own will, with passions unrestrained' (Bergmann 1804 II:217). At the age of ten or eleven, boys and girls began to learn and to assist in the work of adults. The boys in some cases would be taken to the monastery to study Tibetan, religious theology and other related subjects, eventually becoming mandži or novices. The children of the nobility, on the other hand, began to learn to read and write at the age of seven. Notwithstanding the want of Kalmyk educational methods, according to Bergmann, most noble children could read and write Kalmyk, learning these skills in most cases from their elders (1804 II:226). The Kalmyks were said to have good memories which enabled them to become proficient in several languages (Pallas 1776 I:103, Bergmann 1804 II:226).

#### Health and Disease

Pallas found the Kalmyks a healthy and long-lived people. At forty and fifty they were scarcely grey-haired, and men of eighty to one hundred years of age were not a great rarity (177 I:158). He attributed this to their delight in fresh air, steady exercise, light-heartedness, a uniformly unrefined diet and a strong blood-rich body. He observed that the Kalmyks found living in ordinary houses intolerable, and even the nobility lived according to the old ways as they were horrified at remaining in enclosed rooms without air. However, they were subject to various diseases including 'fever' in the summer, plague, smallpox — the most dreaded, pleurisy, apoplexy, epilepsy, boils, psoriasis and coughs (Pallas 1776 I:159).

Though medical knowledge was considered by and large the province of the clergy, various household remedies were utilized. Purgatives such as hot rhubarb, spices, cardomom and saffron, steppe lichens and other herbal leaves were all said to have curative qualities. Therapeutic baths were also considered a remedy for many diseases. (Pallas lists the location of seven such bathing places 1776 I:168). There was one group of non-clerical Kalmyk medical practioners (ototši) who occupied themselves exclusively

with the setting of broken bones. The other group, the emči (emtsi) who 'learn their knowledge from books' were those members of the clergy who specialized in Tibetan medicine. These emči made house calls, taking the pulse of the patient, feeling his hands, inspecting his urine and then making their diagnosis. They used herbs and other medicinal substances such as magnesia, ipecacium and the 'gall' of humans and animals to effect their cures. Diet was another aspect of their treatment. A particular diet was prescribed for a particular illness. In most instances, the patient's diet consisted of nothing but meat brew; in others, meat brew and tea and in still others, simply tea.

As with diet, there were specific palliatives for specific diseases: i. e., empiric of copper sulphate was used for boils; fresh camel's milk was drunk twice a day for three days for hemorrhoids. In more serious illnesses or those not susceptible to ordinary cures, rituals, prayers and holy water were utilized. Religious offering ceremonies involving the use of căi (miniature clay figures) were also used to cure illness. The general feeling towards physicians, reflected in the aphorism: 'what one physician can not do another will do' (Bergmann 1804 II:330), is indicative of the very pragmatic attitude towards disease and its cure which is further substantiated by the sources. (Pallas 1776 I:168-170, Bergmann 1804 II:326-332).

### Hospitality

The Kalmyks' characteristic hospitality, 'their kindest attribute', was an important factor in their way of life and both Pallas and Bergmann dwell on it in considerable detail (Pallas 1776 I:103-6, Bergmann 1804 II:281-5). Hospitality was considered a duty rather than a voluntary matter, the breach of which was punished by the deities. It was an important factor on trips through remote areas. A Kalmyk who had a horse, clothing and a rifle could wander around and be fed and housed at various nomadic camps for at least three months without carrying money or stores with him. While still a good distance from a camp, a traveler would be met by an individual sent out from that camp to inquire as to his destination and to invite the traveler to the camp. When the traveler arrived there, he might find distant relatives or friends who were always happy to receive him with the best they had. Otherwise, he would approach the first tent that he saw and would be graciously received. Non-Kalmyks were also welcomed

in the same way and they could feel complete secure, since robbing or otherwise molesting a guest was considered a heinous crime.

Kalmyk visits and meetings with one another were characterized by certain canons of etiquette. When ordinary people met under normal circumstances, it was without particular ceremony; no formal salutations were exchanged and there were no formalities at their withdrawal. However, when an ordinary Kalmyk visited a person of high rank, there were definite procedures involved in the entrance into the hut, the seating of the visitor and the salutation, all reflecting the difference in rank and the great respect tendered the high ranking individual.<sup>5</sup> Embraces were confined to those within the circle of the household; that is, between close relatives.

Under ordinary circumstances, when a guest entered a Kalmyk home, he was treated in a very friendly fashion, all being gladdened by his arrival. The guest was seated in the place of honor in the ger and served whatever food and drink the host had on hand. Everything was shared with the guest, including tobacco — the host passing his pipe to the guest.

Guests usually brought small gifts with them. Though the Kalmyk host was not indifferent to the size of the gift, it was received without thanks. Nor did the guest convey his thanks or other compliments for the tendered hospitality. In the case of visits by individuals of high rank, particularly by those who could bestow benefits or could cause harm if angered, the host honored these guests with a handsome gift, usually a white horse, as white was deemed to be a lucky color. Purchasing the gift on the same day that the guest arrived did not dishonor either the host or the guest. Pallas specifically indicates that Kalmyk generosity extended only to things that could be eaten; goods and animals were given only in expectation of a return gift, out of gratitude for some favor or to a relative who had suffered losses in his herd due to disease or robbery (1776 I:105). Bergmann, on the other hand, does not indicate the necessity of reciprocity, but his substantive material indicates the existence of gift and counter-gift.

The Kalmyks perpetuated the remembrance of past hospitality. They did this by sending gifts of coins to their former hosts and friends with individuals who were traveling to the districts of these people. Copper coins were usually sent, but if the relationship was of special importance, they sent silver ten-kopeck pieces as a measure of the friendship. All of these gifts in general were called belëg.

## Leisure Activities

Both of our sources record the activities to which the Kalmyks devoted their leisure time. Hunting was considered a diversion as well as a means of supplementing the diet. Archery was also a popular sport. Horse racing and wrestling were particularly prominent as accompaniments to the religious festival of Ürüs to be described below. During the long winter evenings, dancing, singing, drinking, story-telling and card playing were the characteristic activities. The festival of Tsagan Sar was a time for much dancing. The dancing, involving more movement of the feet than of the arms and hands, was done individually or in couples of the same or opposite sex to the accompaniment of the dombr — a lute-like instrument. Other instruments played included the biwe, a type of stick fiddle with a cylindrical body, four strings and a bow strung with horse hair, the jartagann, a type of cymbal, and the tsūr, a reed flute. The singing with dombr accompaniment was characteristically a long drawn-out lament, tonal but with dissonance. The subject matter included heroes' tales, love ballads and princely fables. Drinking of ärki (the alcoholic beverage made from milk) was very popular. Often, but particularly on feast days, 'drinking bouts' took place, seldom lasting less than half the day. Each participant brought his share of ärki and tšigēn. Singing and rounds of drinking progressed until nothing was left.

Bards, called dšangrtši traveled about reciting folk tales and sagas, the story of Djangar the great epic hero being a great favorite. Card playing was also popular. Sometimes men would play the whole night with all the funds they had. Cards were purchased from the Russians; the Kalmyks were said to have knowledge of the European card games such as whist, phara and Boston. Chess was played most frequently by members of the clergy (Pallas 1776 I: 147-157, Bergmann 1804 II: 198-215).

## Literature and Language

The richness of the Kalmyk oral tradition including heroic and semi-historical epics, tales, songs, proverbs and riddles is evidenced from the records (sometimes in the Kalmyk script) of observers, orientalist and literary specialists beginning with Pallas who includes the translation of a Kalmyk song and Bergmann's account of the Djangar epic through to the twentieth century (Pallas 1776 I: 152, Bergmann 1804 II: 205-214, IV: 181: 214).<sup>6</sup> This oral tradition should not be separated and, in reality, it cannot be separated

from the literature, for the latter constitutes for the most part the setting-down of the former, whose roots presumable reach far back in time.

The literary tradition among the Kalmyks may be said to date to the dissemination among the Oirat of the Zaya Pandit script devised on the basis of written Mongolian during the seventeenth century. In the main, the clergy constituted the literati, though some of the nobility and wealthier commoners also learned the script which was used at that time in official documents. By and large, it did not spread widely among the Kalmyks. Translations were made by the clergy from the Tibetan religious texts on cosmology, astronomy, pharmacy and history. Among the epics set down were the Djangan Epic, the Tales of Siddhi-Kur, the Saga of the Campaigns of Ubaši Xung Taiji, the Dörbën Oirat Tuji and the Xalimak Xadin Tuji.

The oral tradition continued to be maintained through the nineteenth century; during this time it drew the attention of Russian and other European orientalists who made collections of this material. At the turn of the century, a number of educated Kalmyks also became interested in the recording and preservation of this part of their cultural heritage, which by this time was dying out among the people.<sup>7</sup>

With reference to language, several dictionaries and vocabularies in Russian or Latin transcription dating to the eighteenth century, collected under the supervision of Pallas, can be found in the Archives of the Academy of Science in Leningrad. Though their importance according to Professor Poppe primarily derives from the fact that they constitute the commencement of the study of philology in Russia, there is recognition by the authors of the relationship between Kalmyk and the other Mongolian languages (1950:363). Even the relationship between Mongolian, Turkish and other languages — the Ural-Altaic hypothesis was recognized at this early date by Strahlenberg who published one of these early dictionaries (1730).

More useful dictionaries and also grammars utilizing the Kalmyk script date from the nineteenth century including among others Zwick (1851, 1853), Smirnov (1857), Pozdneev (1911), Bobrovnikov (1849) and Popov (1847).

## Religious Aspects

The Kalmyks belonged to the Gelugpa (Virtuous Way) or Tibetan 'Yellow Sect' of the Mahāyāna or northern branch of Buddhism which is distinguished from the Hināyāna or southern branch by a series of major theological differences and by different historical traditions. These arose initially from variations in the stress placed on diverse aspects of the career of Buddha. The Mahāyāna branch arose in the first and second centuries A.D. in the northern plains of India and diffused in later centuries to China, Korea, Japan and finally into Tibet in the eighth century. After incorporating innovations from the older Bon religion, it became the state religion.

The first conversion of the Mongols to Buddhism occurred during the reign of Kublai Khan, the grandson of Chingis Khan; but with the collapse of the Yüan dyansty, the Mongols reverted to their earlier shamanistic beliefs. In the fourteenth century, a reformation led by the monk Tsong-Kha-Pa restored traditional Buddhist beliefs and the ascetic way of life — eliminating what was believed to be the laxness and degeneration into which the religion had fallen. His reformation became known as the Gelugpa or Virtuous Way. It soon won the support of the populace and many new monasteries were founded. On the wave of this apostolic fervor, many lama missionaries were sent out, and the Eastern Mongols (in the sixteenth century) and thereafter the Western Mongols or Oirat (in the seventeenth century) were converted to this new sect.<sup>8</sup> The Kalmyks were converted to Lamaism shortly before they reached the Volga area. One of the earliest converts was the Xoşūd prince Bočegas Batur (Pallas 1776 I:26). The new religion was successful because it permitted retention of many earlier shamanistic beliefs and practices (as we shall note in detail below); shamanist and Lamaist cosmology and ritual were syncretized. The more successful Lamaist practices in the field of medicine were another factor promoting conversion to Lamaism.

The monastery, as the center of religious life, was adopted throughout the Mongolian world. Mongolian monasteries took on the entire Tibetan religious complex, including the hierarchal structure of the clergy (though in a somewhat less complex form), the prayers, religious objects and image, music, dress, and ritual calendar. Until 1771, direct contact was maintained with Tibetan religious centers thereby permitting the importation of Tibetan texts and religious images and other articles.

The religious establishments were endowed by the populace and by the aristocracy. They were supported by contributions at ceremonies and rituals, by their own herds and by the services of lay families who were hereditarily attached to the monastery and whose services were donated by the nobles to whom they had previously owed allegiance. The religious establishment was, in effect, an economic corporation.

The monastic hierarchy was an attenuated version of the Tibetan scheme. The basic orders were mandži (novice), getsül, and gelṅ. Above these orders were those clerics with specialized functions, those concerned with financial matters — the nirba and demtši, those concerned with what might be considered academic matters — the zurātši, the astrologer and emči, knowledgeable in Tibetan medicine; and those concerned with ceremonial matters — the gunzel and the gelṅ. Above these clerics were those involved in leadership. In terms of increasing importance they were: bakši, tsordži and the highest ranking, the lama (Pallas 1776 II:120, Bergmann 1804 III:76).

During the eighteenth century felt tents were still used to house the religious establishments. One tent, the sutxe-burxan, contained the religious paraphernalia, the tankas — pictures of the various deities, clerical texts, and religious figures. In another tent, the xuruln-orgē, the various religious services took place. This tent contained the offering table, religious hangings and religious musical instruments (See Plage 3). Finally, there were the tents inhabited by the clergy. All these tents together formed the monastic establishment.

Each ulus had a monastic establishment, and even in the remote districts there were resident priests. The nomadic establishments of the high lamas often rivaled those of the princes in size and elaborateness. There were many lay families formally attached to the religious establishments whose allegiance had been transferred from their prince to the high lama. They had, in effect, been presented as gifts to the clergy by their prince. For example, the supreme lama of the Torgūt controlled eight ulus composed of these families, all of whom had been consecrated to high religious personages and to various deities (Pallas 1776 I:222).

Prayer was primarily in Tibetan but there were prayers in Sanskrit and Kalmyk as well. The Sanskrit component consisted of short formulas which neither the priests nor the laity understood even though they were used with great frequency. The prayer



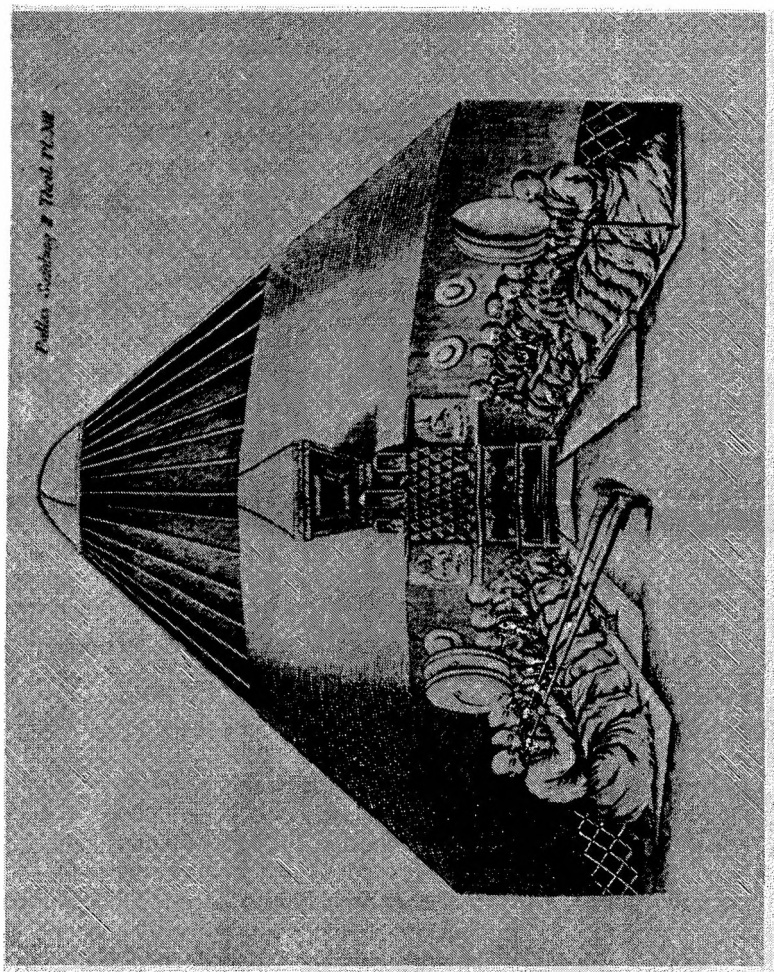


Plate 3

formula Om-ma-ni-bat-ma-hum was the most famous of these. Though the noble laity sometimes learned to read Tibetan, few understood the meaning of what they read. This was not important however, because it was believed that the worshiper grasped the spirit of the prayer as soon as the word was said (Bergmann 1804 III:123, 124). Thus, the mere recital of the word was the important factor. Continuous writing of these formulae also was said to have beneficial effects. The rosary or prayer beads (erkn) and the cylindrical prayer wheel (kürdē) were additional important elements in worship. There were also various types of amulets (sakūsn) which were used by the clergy and nobility as well as by the ordinary laity. The amulets were used for protection against injury, disease, poison and to insure safety on trips. Amulets were sanctioned by the lamaistic clergy, but they derived in part or in whole from earlier shamanistic beliefs, and, as we shall see, were part of the paraphernalia of the shamans who still continued to practice their profession. Still another type of amulet (ueggan [sic]) was fashioned from various trifles by old women (Pallas 1776 II:246).

Kalmyk religious ritual and ceremonial activity was extensive. The traditional patterns of Kalmyk religious ceremonial activity will be analyzed within a framework consisting of the following inclusive categories — annual group and sub-group rituals, rite de passage involving religious personnel, religious involvement in healing and religious activity centered in the home. (This framework was used in the analysis of the field data on the present-day Kalmyks and will be used in our discussion of this data in Chapter IV.)

The most important annual religious ritual was the celebration of Tsagan Sar — the Buddhist New Year or White Month — which occurred in February or March, or the first month of spring on the Kalmyk calendar. Because of its central importance in Kalmyk life — past and present — the details and analysis of the traditional patterns of this ritual as well as present-day practices will be discussed in a separate chapter.

The next ceremony in the annual ceremonial cycle was Ürüs which was celebrated from the eighth to the fifteenth day of the first summer month. It honored the conception of Šagdža-munī or the Buddha. According to Pallas, a festival at this time of year preceded the conversion to Lamaism and was celebrated as early as the time of Chingis Khan (but there is no indication as to its purpose) (1776 II:198). On the evening of the seventh day

of the month, the approach of Ürüs was announced with the playing of musical instruments. The altar in the temple was covered with festive decorations; religious pictures were hung and refreshments were prepared which included tea and meat as well as soured milk which was usually lacking at other important ceremonies. Each day of the ceremonial period was devoted to prayer followed by refreshments. The last day of prayer was also the occasion of the ritual consecration of men to new clerical ranks. On the following day, the religious paraphernalia was removed from the temple and returned to the holy chests and the festivities, which were also characteristic of this celebration, commenced.

The nobility made their formal obeisance to the high lama following which a period of feasting took place. Then the prince and princess retired to separate pavilions, since on this occasion, they were considered as heads of two separate parties — the prince's party being referred to as the party of the right and that of the princess as the party of the left. The audience similarly divided itself into two separate groups. When the rays of the sun waned, the wrestling contests began. There were twenty to thirty pairs of wrestlers, one of each pair with allegiance to the prince and one to the princess. The victor gained glory for himself as well as for his sponsor, the latter giving the victor a drink of tšigēn and a gift of clothing or a pelt. Mock combat and horse racing accompanied by betting also took place at this time (Pallas 1776 II:198-202, Bergmann 1804 III:171-175).

Bergmann records a three-day festival which took place several days after the Ürüs celebration. He calls this festival 'Bilderfest', and notes that its Kalmyk name was Schitani Jldkanai [sic]. (Pallas does not mention this festival, nor is it recorded in later sources. However, elements of it do appear in the present-day celebration of Ürüs-Ova.) The same deities were not always revered during this ceremony, but Šagdža-munī (Buddha), the highest deity, was always included.

Toward midday, the clergy and laity gathered near platforms which had been erected near the temple. At the same time, a pair of holy chests was brought out, and to the accompaniment of religious music, various religious banners, images and curtains were drawn from the chest to decorate the platforms. The lama and his retinue followed by the prince and his family approached the platform, the prince removing the curtain covering the principal picture. All present then made obeisance three times before the picture and seated themselves in front of the platform.

After the intonation of several prayers, candles were lit and an offering was made of grain, then tea and cakes were portioned out to the priests. The ritual slaughtering of sheep and cattle marked the conclusion of this ceremony. Toward evening, the pictures were removed with much pomp and ceremony, replaced in the chests and returned to the burxan tent. On the two succeeding days, the pictures were again removed and mounted on the platforms and the ritual was repeated.

Another annual ceremony was that of Usn-aršan or water consecration. It took place at the time of the rising of certain autumnal stars (said to coincide with the rising of the water deity as a star). The princely court, the clergy and the laity went to the Volga or some other nearby river where the ceremony took place. Large quantities of tea, cakes and sweets were prepared for the feast which followed the ceremony. Following the intonation of prayers, the Supreme Lama bathed in the river, intoned a special prayer and took some of the river water into his mouth and expelled it back into the river. Then the people hurried to the river to drink the water, to bathe and to wash as this consecrated water was believed to be particularly beneficial for those with diseases and infirmities. In addition to the therapeutic effects of the water, participation in the ceremony was said to promote the welfare of the soul. (Pallas 1776 II:202-204, Bergmann 1804 III: 177-179).

Gal tjalg'n, the ceremony of the fire offering, was another yearly ritual. It took place during the last month of autumn on a day of the month calendrically designated as the day of the mouse. A Gal tjalg'n ritual was held by the prince to promote the welfare of the whole ulus and that of the princely herds.<sup>9</sup> Only a lamb or sheep could be offered and a high-ranking lama officiated. Large expenditures were incurred to provide the assembled clergy and dignitaries with fruits, spices and other foods.

Ordinary Kalmyks also had the Gal tjalg'n ceremony performed in their homes to avoid bad luck and poor health during the coming winter and to promote the welfare of family and herds. First, a sheep was slaughtered near the door of the tent in such a way that none of its blood was lost. Then, the sheep was brought into the tent and placed on a wooden support where a strip of skin was removed from the breast and the fat and blood collected without damaging the breast bone. The animal was split, its hair singed and the head, neck, tongue, ribs, backbone and thighs were cooked and eaten by the guests, while the officiating priests

ate the neck and tongue. A portion was set aside for the noble to whom the householder owed allegiance. Whereupon, the main ritual began.<sup>10</sup>

The breast bone was separated from the skin and the remaining flesh; the skin was cut into strips and wound around the breast bone. An image of a deity was placed on the altar in the tent; two lamps were lit and a small piece of silver money placed as an offering before it. In the center of the tent by the hearth, a three-part clay ring was erected and three square clay lamps each containing fat and wicks were placed in the open spaces between the legs and were lit. In the middle of the ring, a small pyre was made from three sticks of wood. The breastbone, skull and jawbone of the slaughtered animals were arranged on the top of the pyre. The priests began to intone the prayers extolling the gods to confer good luck and blessings on the household.

At the conclusion of the prayers, the pyre was lit and melted sheep fat poured on the fire. Holy water was then sprinkled on the fire. All those present intoned while making a beckoning motion. The host who sponsored the ceremony held the right shoulderblade of the sheep on his lap and swung it back and forth when the word čurri was intoned. (This Tibetan word was supposed to exhort the deity of fire to appear in person.) Sometimes the host also held a dish with the cooked meat and the heart of the offering animal, and, at the intonation of čurri, he would eat some of it. In the meantime, the offering on the pyre was completely consumed by the fire. The shoulderblade of the sheep, held by the host during the ceremony, was reserved for use at the following day's meal. This fire ceremony was also performed on other occasions such as weddings (Pallas 1776 II: 327-329, Bergmann 1804 II: 181).

The annual ceremony of Zul (New Year's Day), took place on the twenty-fifth day of the first winter month, designated as the month of the cow. Every Kalmyk reckoned his age according to the number of Zul celebrations since his birth. The ceremony was in commemoration of the ascension of Tsong-Kha Pa, the religious reformer. Two weeks before the ceremony, three days of prayer and the playing of religious music took place in the temple. In the morning on the day of the ceremony, both priests and laity made lamps (zul); those made by the lay women were of dough with as many wicks as the individual's age. The women took great pride in the making of these lamps. The lamps were filled with fat and placed on an outside altar constructed of stakes,

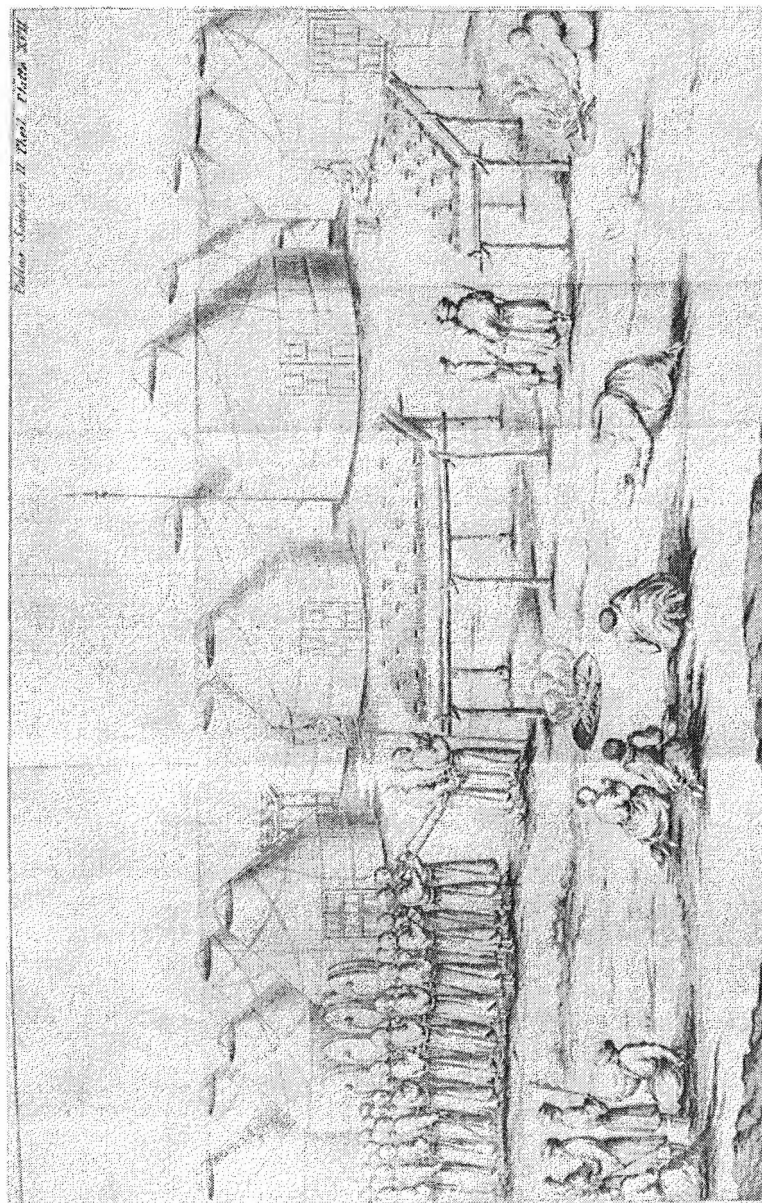
wickerwork and turf (See Plate 4). Each temple had its own altar and the princes shared their with the clergy of the ulus temple. The day was spent in card playing and drinking.

With the onset of evening, the lamps were lit. The lighting took place without any particular ceremony at the altar where the lamps of ordinary people were placed. However, at the altar where the lamps of the priests and princes were located, the following ceremony did take place.

At the foot of the altar, a wooden pyre was ignited. A group of individuals, each with a taper, approached the altar. Nearby stood the leader of the ulus. The priest lit the candles after which the religious music began and a procession was formed, which, holding its tapers, moved around the outdoor altar to the tempo of the music (See Plate 4). At each third circumrotation, all in the procession made obeisance three times to the altar. The ceremony ended with a single procession around the temple with the leader of the procession carrying a picture of Tsong-Kha-Pa. Eventually, the lamps were extinguished by the wind or burned out. They were taken home and used by their owners for household devotions. Future good or evil was prognosticated by the priests on the basis of the way in which the lamps on the altar burned (Pallas 1776 II:205-210, Bergmann 1804 III:162-165).

According to Pallas, two or three days after Zul, each Kalmyk invited a priest to his tent to perform a ritual consecrating the tent and household. This was called Ukal-orgene. The priest entered the festively-adorned tent accompanied by a getsul and carrying various religious sacralia. After the prayers, he blessed all the members of the family by placing his hands on their heads. (Pallas 1776 II:210).

In addition to these more important annual ceremonies, there were other regular calendrical rituals. Each month there were the fixed prayer and fast days of matšag. These occurred on the eighth, fifteenth and thirtieth of each month and they were observed by the clergy and by pious laymen. Morning prayers recited in the tent on that day were longer than usual, and a special diet of tea and meal brew with cheese was adhered to. The decision to observe these ritual days was left to individual will, which was characteristic of all Kalmyk lay participation in religious ceremonialism. In addition to these usual fast and prayer days, there were four other 'great fasts according to the example of the Tibetans' observed by clergy and laity (Pallas 1776 II:185). Pallas does not indicate what these fast days and periods commemorated



*Engraving of the Sugar Works, Plate XVII*

Plate 4

but they are evidently the düts'n observed today in remembrance of important events in the career of the Buddha, Šagdža-munī.

Another small yearly celebration was held at the various obo (owa). These were shrines of piled stones that had traditionally been erected in mountainous districts where the guardian spirits of earth, water and the mountains dwelt. They were erected with great festivity and in addition to the annual rite, were often visited by worshipers during the year. The building of these obo was considered a remnant of older shamanistic superstitions which were current when these people lived in the mountains but which were now incorporated into their Lamaistic beliefs (Pallas 1776 II:336, 214-215).

There was also an annual consecration of the herds. The god Dāldžin Tengr was the protector of all animals as well as the war god. Understandably, this deity was deemed a very strong god who could do great damage to the herds; therefore, his wrath had to be appeased. According to Pallas, belief in this god also descended from shamanism and was taken over by the lamas who supported and participated in this annual consecration, Mal Setrl ³ x ³. The ritual itself illustrates the syncretism which occurred between the older shamanistic beliefs and lamaism.

After erecting an earthen altar in an open area within the nomadic camp, the animals to be consecrated were tied to nearby stakes. Horses were most frequently used, but sometimes steers, camels, goats and unsheared rams were also included.<sup>11</sup> Near the altar, a small hut was erected; and inside religious images, temple banners and the war banners of the princes were set up. Over the altar hung a picture of Šagdža-munī. Various accoutrements of war were also placed near the altar. All kinds of food were prepared beforehand. After the various prayers, all the priests and the entire ulus which had gathered for the occasion feasted. This ceremony was also performed before going to war, when the best and fastest horse was consecrated to the deity (Pallas 1776 II:323, Bergmann 1804 III:136).

In addition to these annual ceremonies, there were also various rites which occurred sporadically and which involved larger or smaller groups of people. The erection of a zaza [sic Pallas] was such a ceremony. Zaza were small shrine-like buildings made of wickerwork and clay or of stone, located in the open steppe. They had small holes into which offerings were placed. The hollow area inside the shrine contained the picture of one of the deities. The ordination or consecration of such a



shrine was considered a meritorious deed or a sign of good thoughts and usually provided the occasion for an ulus-wide celebration. When an ulus migrated into the neighborhood of such a shrine, a festival accompanied by solemn prayer was held. Individuals coming into the area of such a shrine would recite a prayer and make an offering of money or some other trifle.

Another such non-cyclical rite was the rite of Usn-Čot. This was, in essence, an offering sponsored by an individual at a particular time for a variety of reasons, such as illness or for good luck on a trip or with regard to a particular endeavor. The sponsor of the rite reimbursed the participating priests with animals or clothing (Pallas 1776 II:334-5).

The treatment of illness by the clergy was an important aspect of their work. Various methods were employed in addition to the examination and treatment dispensed by the emči. Sometimes a priest would resort to the texts in the Belg<sup>a</sup> n-Bitšig to divine the origin of an illness and its suggested treatment. In the case of serious illness, the clergy resorted to the use of holy water, while the last and most expensive remedy was public prayer. A čai or 'sin' offering was sometimes made to help cure the disease. A sick Kalmyk who did not respond to other treatment would call a gely to his home. The latter would try to ascertain from his religious books the origin of the disease, whether some person coming on foot or by horse had brought the illness, or whether the patient had inadvertently committed some offense or sin. Once the source of the illness was ascertained, a căi — a figure of a man or woman, standing or sitting, or a figure of a horse, camel, or animal or monster, depending on the cause of the illness, was formed from dough. It was then thrown into the fire or into water — depending upon the direction from which the bad luck had come — to bring about a cure (Pallas 1776 II:337-8, 88 Bergmann 1804 II:226).

Three rite de passage were occasions for celebration among the Kalmyks — birth, marriage and death. All involved the participation of the clergy to a greater or lesser extent. Soon after a child was born, a form of baptism or consecration was performed. A priest was called to the tent. Over a basin containing water mixed with salt, he intoned the appropriate prayers. The child was then dipped into the basin three times and presented with a name determined as appropriate on the basis of astrological calculations. The name was most frequently Tibetan and not

usually employed in everyday affairs. Another Kalmyk name, chosen by the parents, was usually the one used.<sup>12</sup>

If the newborn child was a male, a meal was served for the cleric and the friends of the family after the ceremony. The elaborateness of the ceremony varied in relation to the status and rank of the family. The time and hour of the birth was remembered because of its importance in calculating the occurrence of other events during the individual's lifetime (Bergmann 1804 III:142-144, Pallas 1776 II:249).

When a child left the cradle permanently, he was brought to the priest who pronounced a special prayer over the child and gave him an amulet; a prayer formula was written in holy characters, placed in a leather bag and hung around the child's neck (*bū*). This was worn as a protection against evil spirits, illness and other calamities, and it was worn day and night throughout the lifetime of the individual.

Marriage was an important occasion with religious as well as secular features. Because of its historical and present importance in Kalmyk life, it will be considered in a separate chapter.

The direction of mortuary rites was entirely in the hands of the clergy. As an individual neared death, the priest, the 'death *geln*', was called to pray over the individual. He made a careful record of the moment of death and this, together with the time and date of birth, was used to determine from the *Altan Saba* the book of death ceremonies, the kind of burial as well as the time at which it should take place.<sup>13</sup>

There were four methods of disposing of the corpse: burning, committing to water, burial in the earth or covering with a pile of stones. Although these methods were the ones ordained by the *Altan Saba*, on the basis of astrological calculations Bergmann notes that, in reality, the body was almost always placed out on the free steppe where rapacious animals or wild dogs fed upon it (1804 III:154). If the body was destined for the water and the river nearby was not deep enough, or there was no river at all, the body was placed in an open hole and sprinkled with water. Since burning a body required much fuel which was scarce, only the highest priests and princes were burned, the remaining bodies were merely singed. Similarly, as stones were scarce, only a token was used. For those to be interred in the earth, the body was covered only with a thin layer of earth. The individual's birth date determined the direction in which his body would lie.

Until the body was committed to the elements, the priest continually intoned prayers in its presence. A piece of paper upon which holy characters were inscribed was placed upon the deceased. The priest punctured the body with a knife in order to provide the soul with an outlet other than the mouth. If a person died with an open mouth, a religious figure was placed therein; if he died with his eyes open, they were covered with a silk cloth. Various precautions were also taken which depended on the location of the planets at the time of death; i. e., if one died when Saturn was in ascendance, the body was covered with a yellow cloth.

The body normally remained in the place where death had come. The tent was dismantled and the whole nomadic camp moved to another location. If a nobleman died, the whole ulus would move to another location on the same day. The bodies of ordinary people were left unclothed, while the bodies of clerics, nobles or princes would be covered with felt sheets. The body was ringed with grass mats and prayer streamers were placed on the four sides. The priest would determine from the Altan Saba the prayers that were to be said by certain members of the family depending upon the year of birth and date and hour of death of the deceased. Deviation from these and other prescriptions was said to be accompanied by disadvantageous effects for the family of the deceased.

Precautions were also taken at the funeral to prevent pranks on the part of the spirits. The possibility of these occurring was also determined astrologically. For those people who were deemed to have been unlucky in life or who had died at an unlucky time, a dülēn or soul mass was performed. The body was left in the tent untouched until the priests came. The relatives of the deceased brought as many animals as they could, an altar was erected and a prayer service was held and then burial took place.

The cremation of a nobleman or priest was the occasion for a large gathering. An altar of wicker and earth was erected near the tent where the body lay. A piece of paper with a drawing of a human figure was stuck into the earth before the officiating priest. During the intonation of prayer, a reflector was held before the picture. Various clay figures representing horses, cattle and other animals together with prayer streamers were placed on the altar. After the prayers ended, the picture was burned and the ashes mixed with butter and placed in the fire. At this point, the soul was said to have left the body. Then the body was burned. The ashes of lamas were kept in the temple as relics (Pallas 1776 II:249-297, Bergmann 1804 III:152-161).

Lay religious activity centered in the tent or ger, at the location of the religious figures and brass offering cups or tsöktös, the left of the entrance of the tent or at the head of the bed. The usual offering or dēdži was placed in the tsöktös, which were set aside for that purpose. The word dēdži denotes honorary portion, and a bit of all that was eaten was placed there as a libation to the deities. In addition to food offerings, the first spark from the hearth each morning was used to light a fat-filled lamp which was then placed near the offering vessel. This constituted a fire offering which was not to be extinguished, but left to burn itself out. In the tents of noble families who had altars in addition to offering vessels, a tea offering was placed on the altar each morning. Food offerings were also made by the clergy in the temple. In fact, the food eaten by the clergy in the temple in connection with various rites and on days of celebration was conceptualized as an offering (Pallas 1776 II:326, Bergmann 1804 III:134-5).

In addition to offerings and attendance at religious rites when possible, the doing of good works and tenderness (gentleness) were believed to insure blessedness and salvation. Since there was no way of knowing into which form an individual would be reincarnated, people avoided killing any living thing if they could help it, for 'if a tarantula was killed it may have lived a previous life as my father' (Bergmann 1804 III:137). The reading of holy books and the erection of zaza also were believed to incur blessedness.

People still maintained many old superstitions and believed in lucky and unlucky days. Not only were there lucky and unlucky days for people but also for the various types of animals. It was the function of the zurxātši, the astrologer priest, to determine which days were lucky and which were unlucky. Before one made a trip or embarked on a particular endeavor, he would consult the zurxātši. On unlucky days, precautions (amulets, prayers) were taken to avoid bad luck or illness. There were also superstitions concerning a whole range of phenomena, including, among other things, thunder, fire, doors, and types of birds which might cross one's path. For example, there were particular prayer formulae (tarni) which were recited to ward off illness, the ill effects of thunder and lightning and other evils. In all unusual circumstances of life, 'the people had recourse to the priests, presenting them with offerings' in return for their aid (Pallas 1776 II:307).

However, the people 'still adhered to shamanistic conjuring and have leaned towards this way' (Pallas 1776 II:307). Both Pallas and Bergmann provide extensive details of shamanistic

beliefs and practices which they said were still a part of the Kalmyk way of life during the period of their observations (Pallas 1776 II:340-350, Bergmann 1804 III:180-184). These were in addition to the various syncretisms which took place when the lamaist clergy incorporated various shamanist offerings and rites into the body of lamaist belief and practice, syncretisms which both Pallas and Bergmann were continually aware of in their observations. Pallas indicates that at the time of his visit, the Kalmyks still had clandestine shamans of both sexes, the male called bō and the female udgan. Despite persecution by the clergy, they were still sought out by the people, particularly when the priest was unable to help them or when they were unable to afford the assistance of the priest. For example, the shamans performed the fire ceremony, gal tjalg'n, the offering to the water deity, usn chout [sic], and the consecration of animals, 'which the lamas have taken over from them to gratify the people' (Pallas 1776 II:341). The shamans also performed rituals to certain house deities so that cattle breeding would be favorable. Pallas records the details of a shamanistic ceremony which he witnessed among the Dorbet (1776 II:341-345). The shaman was a young unmarried girl and the occasion was the illness of the wife of the sponsor of the ceremony. The ceremony was in essence a fire ceremony (see above) with the additional feature of the shaman's performance during which she invoked the spirits. (The details of this ceremony are in Appendix C).

There were also certain shamanist household idols which were held indispensable, particularly by women. For example, the onggoi, which consisted of four red cotton cloths, the longest undermost and decreasing in length, hanging over the left side of the bed over which was placed the outline of a human form and many white and red silk threads the length of the longest streamer. Before it were placed two clay lamps and a vessel of water as an offering. The idol was for protection against colic or other household problems and for luck. Both the clergy and the shamans sanctioned these onggoi (Pallas 1776 II:346).

One shaman approved by the lamas was the weather maker (zada barna). Lower ranking clergy and lay Kalmyks also engaged in weathermaking. These individuals attempted to determine the weather for one day or, at time of drought, to bring rain by the use of certain prayer formulas.

By and large the Kalmyks retained their attachment to Lamaism. However, Georgi, Lepekhin, Bergmann and Pallas speak of the prostelytism and conversion of some Kalmyks to Christianity

(Orthodoxy) and to Mohammedanism (Georgi 1771:419, Lepekhin 1774:218ff, Bergmann 1804 II:271-2). But Bergmann notes that 'the so-called (Kalmyk) Christians of Saratova (still) have their lamaist religious books, offering utensils and incense, and though their priests wear worldly clothes and let their hair grow, in gatherings in their household they put on their lamaistic robes and perform lamaistic ceremonies thereby fooling proselytizers'. Only if they have been raised in the new religion as children do they believe, for they usually remain loyal to the religion of their fathers (Bergmann 1804 II:272). They were not intolerant of other religions nor unaware of them.

### Socio-Political Sphere

Both of our principal sources, Pallas and Bergmann, provide only brief, sketchy pictures of the structure through which political authority was channeled. The Mongol-Oirat Regulations of 1640, which Pallas indicates were still in force during the period of his observations, also provide us with additional insights, although a total picture of the socio-political structure is not contained therein (1776 I:194). Later observers and commentators on Kalmyk life in the nineteenth century also present material which is said to refer to this earlier period, including Nebol'sin 1852, Kostenkov 1870, and Leontovich 1879, 1880. these sources have been used to shed light on this sphere of life.

Pallas was deeply impressed by the contrast between the free nomadic way of life of the Kalmyks and their 'subjection to princely power from time immemorial' (1776 I:185). Though he takes note of the many instances of groups breaking away from their rulers to become independent units under newer, stronger leaders, the picture he presents in general appears to be one of a strong pyramiding political structure, rapidly solidifying. Whether princely power was as strong and subjects as obedient as he indicates is questionable. Evidence from the Code itself as well as other historical data appear to indicate a much more fluid situation.

Unfortunately, both Pallas and Bergmann dwell upon the various levels of leadership rather than on the administrative structure itself. Furthermore, usage varied from group to group and over a period of time the political structure itself was unstable. In light of this, the following picture must be viewed as a tentative reconstruction.

The title of Xān or Xung-taiji (Xuṇ-tadži) was the highest. It denoted a mighty prince who was not subject to any power, but

one to whom other princes (taiji) owed allegiance and support. The orn, or tribal alliance constituted his domain. The degree of control of the Xan over his subject princes varied. Frequently, he had little authority in matters not involving general security. However, Xān, like Ajuka and Donduk Ombo, 'held princes in a more meaningful vassalage' (Pallas 1776 I:188). But even they were obeyed only because of their strong and authoritative power and their confirmation by the Dalai Lama. The Xān had a zarga or council of advisers including members of the clergy, the princely vassals and the lesser nobles, the number determined by the Xān himself. The power of the zarga was inversely proportional to the power of the reigning Xān.

Taiji had administrative control over political units called ulus. This was the tribal level: the alternative terminology for these units headed by the taiji were nutuk (nutug) if they were independent, or tangatsi. The Xung-taiji had control over his ulus and, through the allegiance of his fellow princes, over the whole people which in this sense was seen as constituting one great ulus.

The title of taiji descended in the senior male lines; all of the remaining male heirs, brothers of the reigning prince and descendants in related collateral lines bore the title of noyon (nojn) also translated as noble or prince. The rule of the ulus likewise descended in the senior male line to the taiji, while the noyon received varying numbers of subject families as compensation. Though the noyon ruled over these families as the taiji did over his people, they were not independent of the rule of the reigning prince, but remained in vassalage to him (Pallas 1776 I:186-187). Leontovich, in his nineteenth century description of the earlier period, observes that these units of families ruled by the noyon were also referred to as ulus as were those of the taiji. Pallas, in another context, also notes that noyon ruled over units called ulus (1771:328). If the most senior line died out, the eldest of the nearest collateral branch was next in the line of succession.

Sometimes restless brothers of the prince or members of collateral lines might remove themselves from the suzerainty of the prince, becoming more and more powerful as groups of deserters from other princes flocked to their leadership until finally they became more powerful than their suzerain. This was the cause of most of the warring among the Kalmyks. Another factor contributing to strife was the fact that many princes gave their younger sons similar or even greater portions of their domains than the eldest, since a prince could distribute his subjects

as an inheritance according to his own desires as soon as his sons reached their majority. Often, apportionment did not occur until after the death of the father and the sons fought over the matter of distribution (Pallas 1776 I:187).

The taiji and noyon, in addition to possessing the power to bequeath their subjects, had the power to impose taxes and exact services from their subjects as well as to bestow various punishments for crimes committed. Subjects could be freed from these taxes and obligatory services by their princes. All clergy and nobility — members of the White Bone — were also exempt from taxes and these services. Many princes determined tributes according to need, but some 'squeezed their people and were cruel' which resulted in the flight of these subjects to other princes when the opportunity presented itself (Pallas 1776 I:188).

The ulus were themselves subdivided. There were aimaks which consisted of one hundred and fifty to three hundred or more 'hearths' (örke) and which were ruled by zaisang (zäsŋ). The zaisang were also considered to be White Bone — members of the nobility. Many were members of junior lines descending from the princely houses who had been granted aimak of one thousand families and had the right to portion their aimak among their children. Other zaisang were commoners who had been appointed by the prince because of meritorious deeds and who could also be deposed by the prince. The zaisang collected yearly taxes from each 'hearth' of the aimak — a tenth of all animals. A portion went to the zaisang himself and the rest to the prince. If the prince incurred extraordinary expenses as in the case of a wedding or a funeral, a separate tax of cattle, milk or other foods was also collected. In addition to tax collection and execution of princely orders, the zaisang had to see that the families subordinate to him did not stray, had to account for the behavior of his people, particularly if the tracks of robbers led back to his aimak. He also adjudicated small disputes and could levy minor punishments and tax penalties. The families of the aimak had to supply the zaisang with meat, milk and other staples when necessary and also armor, weapons and other equipment in time of war.

Aimaks were subdivided into units of forty (hearths) under the leadership of achcha [sic Pallas] or demtši. The basic social unit, the xoton, composed of several agnatically related families who nomadized as a single unit over a particular territory, has been discussed under 'Residence Unit'. It will be recalled that there was no inheritance of property unless it involved separation from



the xoton. According to the first Tsādžin Bitšig of the fifteenth century and later sources, a son, on reaching his majority, could by right request his share of the xoton property — the herds — and separate from the xoton, moving off to form a separate camp.

Pallas recounts that in addition to this civil organization, there was another general arrangement into clusters or banners, otok or otog, which was utilized especially in time of migration and encampment but mostly in time of war.<sup>14</sup> 'The oldest subjects of the princely houses, who in part can be reckoned as relatives, hold themselves in camping and in battle, always to the right; the rest, particularly those who through war or other events are included in a horde of defeated peoples — to the left of the prince' (Pallas 1776 I:221). (See Figure 1 for a list of otok within each banner according to rank as contained in Pallas 1776 I:221-2.) The subdivisions of Boorol [sic] and Tschonus [sic] in Dörbet and Erketenn in Torgūt are said to represent the sons of a father by various wives. The three Keraht [sic] otok were said to originate from the most distant Torgūt collateral lines, the relationship of these units to one another being couched in kin terms. This is the only instance in either Pallas, Bergmann or the Mongol-Oirat Code itself which implies or specifically indicates that any of the administrative units above the level of the xoton were units whose membership involved kinship as the mode of reckoning, a point so frequently reiterated by nineteenth century observers and commentators. Bergmann does not mention the otok or the unit of forty, but merely reiterates the three-fold hierarchical structure of xoton-aimak-ulus. The Mongol-Oirat Regulations do not contain any statute that specifically spells out the administrative structure. Throughout the various statutes, the xoton, aimak and ulus are mentioned most particularly with regard to the duties of the leaders of such units. Mention is also made of units with numerical designations — unit of forty kibitkas (tax collector of forty), unit of one hundred kibitkas. There are also hints at the possible identity of the aimak with the unit of forty. In later edicts of Galdan Khan Taiji mention is made, for the first time in the law codes, of the otok. In this context it is used as an

Figure 1. List of Otoks recorded in Pallas (1776 I:221-222)  
(recording his spelling)

Dörbët:

Barron Ottok (Right Wing Otok) — 9  
Boorol subdivided into Ike and Baga Boorol  
Tuktun  
Zorros  
Schärait  
Söht

Sun Ottok (Left Wing Otok)

Tschonussubdivided into Ike and Baga Tschonus  
Budermuss  
Kubut  
Buchus

Plus the Zoochor group, a remnant of the Erketen of the Tor-  
gūt group who fled in 1771 and who were assigned to the Dörbët.

Torgūt:

Khan's ulus

Barron Ottok  
Ike Erketenn  
Baga Erketenn  
Kovon — nojot  
Alyt-adoon  
Bagoot

Sun Ottok

Ike Keraht  
Baga Keraht  
Chachatschin Keraht  
Ike Zaatun  
Baga Zaatun  
Mailain-Zaatun  
Soongar

'the deserters from other ulus and those who through marriage  
or other circumstances were attached to the Chans Ulus were  
formed into special small otok' (Pallas 1776 I:222)

Ssabssor  
Charachus  
Chabutschiner

Priestly ulus (Schabinare)

Lamain Schabinare  
Bakschin Schabinare  
Kanshimbain  
Zoudshingin  
Burchanin  
Sunkabain  
Zordshin  
Chutukin

alternate to aimak and appears to refer to large aimaks, having the same administrative functions as the former unit.

The code, however, nowhere specifies the exact relationship and interconnection of all these units into a particular structure. The crucial question appears to be the interrelationship between the numerical units and the otok on the one hand and the xoton-aimak-ulus structure on the other hand. Were these two sets of structures, or was the numerical structure structure an attempt to tighten the socio-political structure as suggested by Krader (1953:235-6)? The evidence seems at present to weigh in the direction of the former contention.

The possibility of a kinship basis for the political structure, supported in only one instance in the sources of the eighteenth century, is asserted as fact by many of the nineteenth century writers on Kalmyk life, including Kostenkov (1870), Leontovich (1880), Nebol'sin (1853), and Biuler (1846). However, their material is not documented as to source and in general leaves unresolved many basic questions about the structure. For example, Leontovich presents the following description of the Kalmyk structure but nowhere does he cite the basis for his description.

The social mode of life of the Mongol tribes historically was based on physiological bases of blood origin from common ancestors. The same principle lay in the basis of social organization of kin alliances of the Oirats of the 17th century and until now is kept without essential modification in the social system of the contemporary Kalmyks ... Distinction between calculated kin alliances is expressed in greater or less closeness or distance of degrees of blood relationship lying at the basis of all these unions. Closeness of kin bonds characterize principally the xoton and unions closest to it but then these bonds more or less become smaller with each subsequent step occupied by unions in kin scale. On the last step of tribal alliance (nutuk and oron) relationship remains only bonds of genealogical tradition — kin consciousness of tribe and Oirat alliance were maintained by unity of other life interests ... (Leontovich 1880:183)

The Regulations of 1640 and subsequent edicts do, however, make several references to the regulation of family matters. For example, punishment was to be meted out for insults and injuries to the most senior individual of the xoton who was its leader (Statute No. 17, Leontovich 1879:31). Stealing from close relatives was not considered theft and was not punishable (Statute

No. 147, Leontovich 1879:135). There were also penalties for fighting with one's parents. Relations between daughter-in-law and parents-in-law which resulted in beating on either side were penalized by fines (Pallas 1776 I:199-200).

The Code covered a broad range of behavior. There were provisions for keeping order and stipulated penalties in camels, horses and skins for disturbing the peace through warfare or plundering of an aimak or otok. There were penalties for cowardice in war or for inferior fighting. The obligation to provide horses and hospitality was also included. There were many provisions relating to the clergy, primarily involving the preservation of their dignity. They were forbidden to engage in commerce or to participate in violence. There were fines for the violation of monastic vows. Shamans who continued to practice were fined. If the three holy days each month were profaned, fines were extracted. Punishments for patricide and wife killing were also spelled out. The code contained several statutes concerning marriage. Betrothal gifts and dowry for each rank were recorded in the code. The correct marriage age and the course of events to be followed if the intended died or the engagement did not come to fruition were also detailed. The demtši or 'leader of forty' was under penalty to see to it that four young men from his unit married yearly (See Chapter VI on marriage for further details). Penalties for stealing different types of animals, penalties for harboring thieves, ownership of cattle, rewards for saving individuals from drowning or fire were also included in the code. (Pallas 1776 I:195-215, Riasanovsky 1929:93).

In addition to the various administrative subdivisions of Kalmyk society, there was also a basic class division on the steppe between the White Bone or Tsagan Yasn, the nobility, and the Black Bone or Xar Yasn, the commoners. This basic division in Mongol society has been documented by countless observers as early as the time of Chingis Khan. The social gap between White Bone and Black Bone is duly noted by Pallas and Bergmann, including the details of the elaborate points of etiquette which delineated behavior between members of the two classes.

The reconciliation of the existence of these classes with the possibility of a kin basis of organization for the structure of successively more extensive political units has challenged successive generations of Mongolists who have offered various explanations to account for this anomaly. For example, Kostenkov sees the class division arising from a conquest situation, the Black Bone being conquered by the White Bone. He affirms the kin basis of the political structure but does not resolve the seeming conflict (1870:29). Leontovich sees the classes developing on the concept

of kin seniority, of the primary of the xoton and submission to him of the rest of the xoton, the differences between junior and senior being maintained in the differences between the White and Black Bone both bound together by the principles of blood origin from one tribal root (Leontovich 1880:329). This is a plausible explanation though extant primary source materials present no data on such development; neither do these sources negate this hypothetical reconstruction. A further complication is by the presence of numerous rankings within these two basic classes. For example, the Mongol-Oirat Regulations of 1640 referred to the following rankings: within the White Bone the Xung-taiji or Xan — the supreme ruler — and taiji, or prince, formed the highest level as rulers of whole tribes; then the noyon, or princes of whole ulus; the tabanqut, the sons-in-law of taiji who were not of royal (Xan) blood but rather from the noyon; the smaller or lesser noyon who had no ulus of their own and were attached to the taiji's court or to the court of the ulus noyon; the zaisang who were divided into two groups, the senior who ruled the otok, aimak and hundred and the lesser zaisang who ruled the forty and the twenty. Between the White Bone and the Black Bone was a transitional class composed of the Erketen (Erkete Kun) and the Darchan (Darxan) — groups of individuals who were freed from taxes and other military obligations as a result of a military or non-military deed of merit. The Black Bone itself appeared to have been divided into two classes, the poor and the more well-to-do. This latter distinction is made, for example, in the discussion of the required dowry and bridal payment for each rank (Statute No. 47, Leontovich 1879:153, 157).

On the basis of the evidence presented, it is apparent that definite or final conclusions concerning the social and political organizations of the Kalmyks in this early period cannot be made in view of the vague conflicting picture which extant sources present. The code and subsequent promulgations undoubtedly were attempts to strengthen and to fix the political structure from the top down at the expense of kin succession and the neglect of kin organization which earlier appears to have been the basis of the various units. One can say with some certainty that a hierarchial segmentary lineage type of organization did exist at one time, but the extent of its later importance is questionable. It seems likely that even as a fiction, it had to a great extent already fallen away except at the lower levels — transcended, instead, by a political structure which to some extent mirrored the former lineage organization. This dual structure might be interpreted in the following way: the xoton, aimak and ulus represented the remains of the former lineage structure, possibly maintaining the fiction of a kin basis of organization; while the

structure of numerical units represented the organization of 'alien' elements who were no longer being absorbed into the lineage structure but who instead, during this period of the ascendancy of the political structure over its kin basis, were merely being subordinated within the administrative hierarchy in a convenient form — as numerical units.

#### NOTES

1. We recognize the generally accepted assumption that with time, all cultures undergo some change, and that the rate of change will vary at different times. During the long periods of time when the socio-cultural patterns of particular societies have remained more or less stabilized, these patterns have come to be recognized as characteristic of the particular societies — as the 'traditional' patterns of the societies. It is these 'traditional' patterns of the Kalmyk society that we shall describe in this chapter.
2. In these accounts, the information in almost all instances is presented as characteristic of all Kalmyk groups. Tribal and group variation, if it existed, is not noted. However, wherever possible, the author notes the particular group to which the descriptions apply.
3. Rights to private moveable property did however exist. Several of the Mongol-Oirat Regulations support such rights, namely, the fact that an animal killed by a crossbow belonged to the owner of the crossbow and whoever killed a man wearing a cuirass could take it from him (Riasanovsky 1929:80).
4. Bread appears to have assumed more importance in the interval between the Pallas visit in 1772 and the Bergmann visits in 1803. Pallas mentions only the baking of cakes from purchased meal while Bergmann mentions the purchase as well as home manufacture of cakes and bread.
5. There was a basic class division in Kalmyk society between those of noble rank who were members of the White Bone or Tsagan Yasn and commoners who belonged to the Black Bone or Xar Yasn. This distinction will be discussed in detail below.
6. Poppe presents a detailed account and an annotated list of these various collections — attesting to the richness of this tradition (1955:370-79).
7. See Adelman for a detailed account of this attempt at 'revitalization' (1960).

8. Both Pallas and Bergmann present extensive data on the origin and promulgation of Lamaism, its cosmology and world system, the construction of the spirit world, the wanderings and series of rebirths of deceased souls, the genealogy of Buddha and other lesser deities, all of which knowledge is the particular province of the clergy. Since our study of the present-day Kalmyks in the United States did not involve extensive work with the clergy concerning these matters and since the layman's knowledge of these matters was slight and was not involved in his religious participation, we will not consider this material as pertinent at this time.

9. According to Pallas, this ceremony, sponsored by the prince, dated to the time of Chingis Khan (1776 II:327).

10. Bergmann, who recounts the offering as it took place in the tent of a prince, states that the eating of these portions of the slaughtered animal occurred after the prayer period (1804 III:180).

11. Pallas notes that by and large only princes and nobles could arrange such a ceremony because of the large number of animals required and the cost involved.

12. Family names were not used. In legal papers, a man's father's name was set before his own as a further means of identification.

13. For further details of the Altan Saba, the Mongolian Lamaist Burial Manual see Krueger 1964.

14. The otok, in their capacity as warfare units, were divided into squadrons of 100 and into companies of 50.

## CHAPTER III

### PERIOD OF TRANSITION

The exodus of 1771 marked the beginning of a period of change for the Kalmyks who remained within the Russian Empire. Though these changes were confined primarily to the political sphere of life during the greater part of the 19th century, with the waning of the century, the economic as well as other spheres of life also became arenas of change.

The subsequent tribal divisions and realignments after 1771 and the continuously increasing penetration of the Russian governmental structure into the Kalmyk political structure became coupled with the increasing rigidity of that structure. The ulus became the highest administrative level of Kalmyk government, with the leaders of the ulus directly subordinated to the Russian government. The nine ulus resulting from the reorganization represented, in some instances, hybrid mixtures of different tribal parts (Leontovich 1880:231). The Code of 1822, (the Zinzili Ulozheni), a revision of the Mongol-Oirat Regulations of 1640 which was drawn up at the insistence of the Russian Government, and subsequent governmental documents and observers' reports throughout the 19th century document these changes in political structure and the ever-increasing Russian influence and control. In the Code and in some of the reports, we continue to find mention of both the numerical administrative units of the ten, the forty and the hundred as well as the xoton-aimak-ulus hierarchy (Nebol'sin 1852:8, Kostenkov 1870:29-32). However, the relationship of these two sets of structures is not further clarified. The observers usually link the series of numerical units with mention of military pursuits which, at the time of their writing, no longer existed.

In the Code, the numerical units are most frequently referred to in descriptions of governmental duties and functions; and a coalescence of the two seems to have been taking place. Careful examination of the Code reveals a number of instances where the ten is equated to the xoton and the hundred to the aimak. Furthermore, the otok, known in the nineteenth century as rod or angi



appears to have merged into the xoton-aimak-ulus structure encompassing several aimaks. In the latter half of the century, there is no further mention of the numerical units in any sources (except with reference to the Buzāva (see below). The code also reveals the beginning of the use of Russian terms to denote positions of leadership. For example, the leaders of the ten and the forty were known by the Russian terms starshina and starosta respectively.

Many of the nineteenth-century sources continued to mention the kin basis of the xoton-aimak-ulus structure. (Zhitetski 1891: 21, Kostenkov 1869:5, Bentkovski 1868:93, Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennykh Imushchestv 1868:106, Smirnov 1885:7, N. K. 1893:32, Spasskii 1894:2, Borisov 1917:31.)<sup>1</sup> However, none of the basic problems alluded to in Chapter II are resolved by these sources.

Those Dörbet who moved into the Don region during the eighteenth century, had, in 1803, become subject to a new administration with a pristav (Russian governmental officer) assuming the name of troop atmen at the head of the group. Originally, when they entered the Don area they were divided into units headed by princes and 'were governed on the basis of old custom' (Snesarev 1881:4). In 1803, they were reorganized into hundreds (sotn'a) each of which were assigned areas of 100 versts (a verst equals approximately 3500 feet) for their nomadization.<sup>2</sup> The hundreds were divided into xoton. There was a retention of the ulus designation, the whole group being divided into three ulus which encompassed the hundreds, but the ulus were retained in name only and had no administrative function.

In 1835, regulations were promulgated guaranteeing the Don Kalmyk (or Buzāva as they came to be called) freedom of religion and practice of their rites and ceremonies (Snesarev 1881:2-6). Though in private quarrels and in some situations relating to public life, the Buzāva were subject to their elders and to the sotnik, who rendered their decisions in accordance with custom, in criminal cases they were subject to the local Don Cossack governmental office. (Krasnov 1863:241).

For those Kalmyks remaining in the Astrakhan Guberniia, the nineteenth century also saw marked changes and rearrangements of the actual political units at the various levels. In 1860, the Ike Dörbet ulus moved into the Stavropol' Guberniia. The xoton-aimak-rod (angi) ulus structure appears to have remained basically unchanged, but the angi appears to have ceased having administrative significance at some time during this period though it continued to be mentioned as part of the structure (N. K. 1893:32,

Kostenkov 1868 A:5). The traditional hereditary leadership of the units in the political structure gradually lost its power. When a noble line died out, the unit became 'public' or 'escheated' and came under the direct jurisdiction of the Russian state to be ruled by Russian officials appointed as public guardians.

The Law of March 15, 1892, applying specifically to the Kalmyks of the Astrakhan and Stavropol' Guberniia, wrought further, more fundamental changes.<sup>3</sup> Under its provisions, those remaining hereditary leaders were deprived of their power and the leadership of the units within the administrative structure passed in the ulus to a Russian trustee and 'Guardian of the ulus', and, in the aimak and xoton, to individuals elected to their posts of leadership. There were also periodic assemblies of representatives at the ulus and aimak levels whose functions included the election of judges and other officials of the ulus government and the apportionment of duties imposed on the group as a whole. Astrakhan informants indicate that the political structure as revised by the Law of March 15, 1892 was operating at the time of the Revolution. The political structure of the Buzāva also continued to operate in terms of the thirteen zūn or hundreds, though informants did not refer to them as zūn or soṭn'a, but rather as aimak. The Russian government referred to these units as stanitsas, and in this latter form, they were incorporated into the Russian political structure and their Kalmyk names were Russianized.

As is evident from our description of traditional patterns, the sources of the eighteenth century and the Regulations of 1640 contain a paucity of specific data on family organization and kinship. However, nineteenth century observers did take some note of these features of Kalmyk life and the Code of 1822 did set forth in detail the legal basis for some aspects of family life, i. e., inheritance and the rights of relatives. This data will now be briefly summarized in order to round out our picture of traditional Kalmyk life for this data leads us to suppose that many of these features of family life were retained from previous times.

Nebol'sin provides us with information concerning inheritance, specifically in the Xoshut ulus. He observes that, according to custom, persons had full right to divide their property as they wished during their lifetime. If one died without a will, nine-tenths of the property was divided equally among all the sons, the oldest son receiving the additional tenth. The oldest son had to give part of his inheritance to the temple (reiterated by Dubrov 1898:62). If only daughters survived, the estate was divided equally

among them.<sup>4</sup> When daughters and sons survived, everything went to the sons who had to contribute for their sisters' dowries. If the sisters had sons, the uncles had to give them part of the inheritance. If they did not, then 'descendants or grandsons through the female line had the right to proceed to force the allotment' (Nebol'sin 1852:109). This right was referred to as ze-biar'dyk-iushn.

The acquisition of this inheritance was accomplished by the baranta, the legalized rustling of livestock, which was not considered to be a crime. Nebol'sin records the standardized procedures for the baranta. He observes that the nephew or grandson had to appear in the xoton of his relatives and inform only the xoton elder of his intention. He then could drive off part of the horses or cattle of his maternal relative with impunity. This could be repeated three times by law. The uncle or grandfather who suffered the loss had no legal recourse (Nebol'sin 1852:110).<sup>5</sup> This practice has its legal basis in Statute No. 147 of the Regulations of 1640 where mention is made of the taking of property without penalty by close maternal relatives. In the revised Code of 1822, the Zinzileni Ulozheni, the legal basis for Nebol'sin's description is clearly set forth in detail (Leontovich 1880:37-39, No. 45-48). The regulations further state that only three maternal nephews with close relationships can claim a share. They, in turn, were to divide what they seized among their brothers.

The many observers writing during the nineteenth century substantiate the continuance in general of the traditional Kalmyk way of life as previously described. Life in the nomadic camp, the xoton, remained substantially the same (Bentkovski 1868 86ff, Nebol'sin 1852 37ff, 117ff). It was still primarily a kin-based unit with the same structure and roles and the same strong respect relationship between junior and senior (Bentkovski 1868 89, Kalmyki 1880:2, Nebol'sin 1852:111, Zhitetski 1892:22).

As the century drew to a close, all this began to change. Zhitetski, for example, notes that the 'kin' principle was the basic aspect of the xoton, though in its pure form it was seldom observed (1893:34). However, even in the xoton made up of unrelated families, kin relations in fictive form were characteristic. In such cases all the members of the xoton regarded themselves as related by kinship to the elder of the xoton and each xoton, whether kin based or not, bore the name of its most senior male. 'Individuals, in case of weddings, birth or

misfortune may turn to their relatives (torl) ... to the people of their xoton (acting in the position of relatives)' (Zhitetski 1893:35).

The strong respect of commoners toward the nobility — the noyon and the zaisang — continued to operate during most of the nineteenth century. The extensive and detailed etiquette involved in contacts with the nobility, the bringing of gifts and offerings and the paying of respect on festive occasions are detailed by observers until 1890. 'The non-observance of these customs was unthinkable' (Kalmyki 1880:2). However, Zhitetski reports that by the last decade of the nineteenth century, these class differences were beginning to be erased (1893:40).

Marriages between the two 'classes' were also beginning to occur, but only of males to 'commoner' women, for they 'do not give their daughters into the surroundings of common people'. Economic wealth 'against which pales and fades preference by birth' was still another factor beginning to affect the 'class' structure (Zhitetski 1893:40). Farforovski also notes the 'development of strong respect for wealth' (1909:209). Zhitetski cites the introduction of Russian reading, writing and view of life and personal position as still other factors which were adding to the 'decay of the classes' (1893:40). Furthermore, the abolition of the special rights of the White Bone by the Law of 1892 which had previously enabled them to improve their economic situation was still another equalizing factor. The custom and rite which 'expressed their 'class' position was dying out' (Zhitetski 1893:40). For example, the rite of dedži, the custom of annually presenting an offering of boiled sheep, horses and skins of ärki (alcoholic beverage distilled from milk) from each group to its noyon as a greeting had already been discontinued in the Baga Dörbet ulus as well as the custom of annually selling one sheep from each ten kibitkas and presenting the proceeds to the noyon. However, because of the personal feelings of the people for their noyon, one or more of these customs might be continued, such as visiting the noyon's family with a gift at the time of his death or paying respect to the noyon by visiting him with a skin of ärki and sheep meat (Zhitetski 1893:40, 41).

By and large, the Kalmyks continued to adhere to their traditional economic pursuit — nomadic pastoralism. Though the annual migration cycle was more and more restricted by land and population pressures, maps for most of this period continue to indicate winter and summer nomadizing areas for the various ulus. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter I, this period did mark a change in the economic sphere of life for part of the Kalmyk population.

The decimation of herds by extreme climatic conditions forced many Kalmyks to seek work among the Russians either as herds-men or in the fisheries of Astrakhan. However, as early as the end of the eighteenth century, Pallas had recorded these as economic alternatives for the Kalmyks when they were in extreme need (I:104).<sup>6</sup> The endeavors on the part of the government through Homestead Acts to encourage sedentarization among the Kalmyks in the Astrakhan area in the mid-nineteenth century met with little success. Even the Kalmyks in the Stavropol' Guberniia, and the Buzāva who, due to more intensive contacts with the more numerous Slavic populations in their areas had greater knowledge of and participated to some extent in agricultural pursuits, still placed primary emphasis on herding and pastoralism (Dubrov 1898:74) (see Chapter I). Many Buzāva had begun to spend the winter in sod or wooden houses but they still nomadized in the summer (L.N. 1890:57).

Elderly Buzāva informants frequently recall moving to the felt tent in the summertime, and one mentioned to the author that her family ranged from the Don area as far as the Kuban River in the summer months in search of grass for its herds. This shifting pattern of housing was also found to some extent among the Ike Dörbet of Stavropol Guberniia (Dubrov 1898:48, 197).

Other broad patterns of life also appear to have continued unchanged. Ethnographic data for the latter half of the nineteenth century is not as extensive or as detailed as earlier reports but what is available does not show any major deviation from traditional patterns. For example, Zhitetski's ethnography on the Astrakhan Kalmyks in the last decade of the century gives details concerning food, hospitality, proper rules of etiquette to guests and those of higher station, music, dance, religious rituals and ceremonies, traditional pastimes and other topics which follow the general pattern of earlier periods (1893). This is echoed throughout the century by other observers (Nefed'ev 1834, Nebol'sin 1852, N. O. V. 1862, Smirnov 1882, Dubrov 1898).

Several observers specifically make note of the Kamyks' attachment to the steppe and to their traditional way of life (Nefed'ev 1834:183, Snesarev 1881:16). Brailovsky writes in 1901 that 'the Kalmyks with difficulty give way to the influence of Russian culture (they) do not change their aboriginal habits' (1901:730).

For the brief period of the twentieth century prior to the revolution written sources are scant; however, the recollections of elderly informants do cover this period. Among the Buzāva, the trend toward sedentarization continued and sod houses began to be used by many as year-round habitations. Their herds of sheep, cattle and horses were still extensive, indicating their continued preoccupation with pastoral pursuits. However, kitchen gardens were maintained whose produce included potatoes, onions and tomatoes. Wheat was grown by the Russians on land owned by the Kalmyks in exchange for half of the harvest. Movement into permanent dwellings did not affect the household composition; extended families, instead of occupying one or more contiguous tents, now occupied a single dwelling. The type of economic tasks and the division of labor also remained much the same, although the men occasionally helped the Russians with the wheat harvest on their land and the women worked in the vegetable gardens. Russian dishes utilizing the vegetable products now available from kitchen gardens augmented the narrow range of traditional Kalmyk cuisine. Knowledge of the Russian language became more widespread concurrently with the development of state schools, the availability of a university education and the gradual acceptance by the Kalmyks of what this education offered them. This led to the development of a small Kalmyk intelligentsia with a Russian educational and cultural background, but one which did not sever its relations with family, local groups, the Buddhist religion or its Kalmyk heritage but rather, one which was interested in its maintenance and renewal (Adelman 1960:37-38). However, it still provided a further avenue for the entry of a variety of Russian culture traits into the group as a whole.

Those Kalmyks living in the Astrakhan steppe area appear to have remained to a great degree isolated from Russian influences, particularly in the eastern area of the steppe. In the western area, however, the practice of agriculture was begun on a sporadic basis. Furthermore, a shift to more permanent housing appears to have begun during this period. Krukovskaia notes in 1909 the use of wooden and sod houses in areas close to the Kalmyk bazaar, stating that 'in our time not all Kalmyks lead a nomadic form of life ... little by little they accustom themselves to settled life' (1904:118). Two sources from the decade subsequent to the Revolution but prior to collectivization, indicate areas of change and of persistence in this area (Borisov 1926 and Mol'kov 1928). Mol'kov's more detailed account — virtually an ethnography — observes that cattle rearing continued to be the main occupation and that agriculture was of secondary importance, with forty percent of the population

still nomadic. One quarter of the population still lived in the same tents as in the past (some of the population who lived in sod houses still nomadized part of the year (Borisov 1926:21). The diet was still primarily based on animal and milk products with the traditional dishes of budan, Kalmyk tea and boiled meat in predominance. The photographs in the Mol'kov account attest to the maintenance of many of the traditional furnishings in the tent — the hangings, the kettle and the burxan (household religious shrine) — and the addition of wooden beds, chairs and tables (1928:205-256).

The xoton-aimak-ulus administrative structure remained unchanged; underneath 'these administrative layers remained the kin basis', the 'idea well known among other Mongol tribes of gradations of relations between relatives' (Mol'kov 1928:289). The emphasis on kinship in the male line, the exogamous and agnatic nature of the Kalmyk rod and the mutual aid which its members give to one another; the presence of levirate, and marriage by means of abduction;<sup>7</sup> the maintenance of strong respect of junior for senior, daughter-in-law for older male-in-laws, and the absence of family names are also reiterated by Mol'kov (1928:290-291 and Borisov 1929:23-25). Additional details on social life are meager, although both authors mention the continued importance of hospitality (Borisov 1926:22, Mol'kov 1928:304). There are no details regarding religious institutions or the ceremonial cycle. This is understandable since the churches during this period were closed and the religious hierarchy disbanded. However, Borisov does mention the continued practice of Tibetan medicine by a gely (1926:22). Informants report the continuation of some religious life such as the celebration of Tsagan Sar in a semi-surreptitious manner and the continued maintenance of lay religious activity, including secret prayer meetings led by lay individuals with some knowledge of prayer and ritual.

The thirties marked the period of collectivization. Under a special law, Kalmyks were permitted to retain ownership of some animals. According to informants, they could keep one horse, forty sheep and five cows, while in the Russian republic, individuals could keep only one cow. They were also permitted to maintain kitchen gardens. During this period, the Kalmyk population was settled into collectives and those who resisted were labeled kulaks and shipped to Siberia. Attempts were made to break up the conglomerates of kin — 'the government watched not to be concentrated my family like before'. Individuals attempted to thwart the government by finding work for their relatives wherever possible on collectives to which they were sent, in order to 'bring the people together again'. There was universal schooling in Kalmyk

and in Russian and the entrance of Kalmyks into trades other than those connected with a pastoral or agricultural economy. However, they remained distinct as one of the minority peoples of the U.S.S.R. with their own republic and with a distinctive language and heritage which persisted to the degree that it did not interfere with Russian governmental policy.

This situation persisted until the beginning of World War II and the German invasion of Russia. With the German retreat and the end of the War came the abolition of the Kalmyk Republic and the forced movement of its Kalmyk population to Siberia. In the late nineteen fifties, the Kalmyks returned to their homeland and the Kalmyk Republic was reconstituted. The author has collected some material on Kalmyk life as it is in the Soviet Union today and will discuss it in relation to the present-day life of the Kalmyks in the United States.<sup>8</sup>



## NOTES

1. In some instances, the wording of comments concerning the kin basis of the political structure indicates that some of these sources merely repeated earlier sources.

2. These sotn'a were also referred to as aimak, the latter being the usual Buzāva usage for identification purposes until the present time. From the end of the nineteenth century, they were equated with stanitsa and were thus integrated into the Don Oblast (Popov 1919:19).

3. Dubrov, writing in 1898 specifically about the Ike Dörbet in Stavropol' Guberniia, records its provisions as does Farforovskii (1909:104).

4. The question of female inheritance of the rule of an aimak or ulus was discussed in several 19th century sources. Büler presents some specific case materials indicating that the question was usually resolved negatively for the women concerned (1846).

5. The right of baranta appears to extend to father's sister's child's child since one can rustle from maternal grandfather as well as maternal uncle.

6. It is interesting to note that the code of 1822 provides that those who desired to leave their kibitkas because of poverty and to go among the Russians for work or for trade had to have the permission of their nobles and zaisang (Statute 35, Leontovich 1880:32).

7. Mol'kov notes the promulgation by the President of the Kalmyk Republic of a special edict calling for an end to the abductions of women and the investigation of such cases (1928:291).

8. The life of those Kalmyks who emigrated to Eastern Europe during the time of the revolution has been briefly detailed in Chapter I.

## PART II THE PRESENT

## CHAPTER IV

### THE KALMYK SOCIAL UNIT TODAY: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

#### Introduction

In this and succeeding chapters, we will document various features of the life of the Kalmyks in America today. In order to assess accurately what aspects of the Kalmyks' traditional way of life continue to be maintained, we must keep in mind their previous nomadic pastoral existence (as detailed in Chapter III), which was adhered to in greater or lesser degree until the time of the Russian Revolution. As the analysis proceeds, we will see that despite many major changes and the replacement of Kalmyk culture traits with traits from successive host cultures, a nucleus of Kalmyk culture traits has remained.

#### The Setting

As was indicated in the Introduction, the Kalmyk social unit in America does not coincide with a particular community or with a physically delimited territorial area. The Kalmyk population in the United States, totalling about 1,000 persons, is concentrated principally in two areas. One area, known as Freewood Acres, is located in Farmingdale, a semi-rural community in New Jersey, several miles north of the resort town of Lakewood. The other is located in an older section of north central Philadelphia, where successive waves of first-generation immigrants have settled from colonial times until the present day. There are also several families living in New Brunswick and Paterson, New Jersey, and in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Even within the two major areas of concentration, the individual residential units or households are dispersed among peoples of other cultural origins and affiliations who are also in many instances first-generation immigrants. In New Jersey, these interstitial households are primarily of Slavic origin; while in Philadelphia they include Slavic, southern Negro and Puerto Rican elements. (A schematic diagram of a portion of

the Freewood Acres settlement [Fig. 2] illustrates this point.) The greater density of population in urban Philadelphia has resulted in more non-Kalmyk residential units separating the Kalmyk Households.

The distances between the two principal areas and the other smaller areas may be traversed by auto within an hour and a half. Characteristically, social interaction and contact, though somewhat lower between the areas than within each area of concentration, is still very high, with individuals traveling back and forth almost every weekend. Social interaction among the Kalmyks of the several areas is far greater than their interaction with their non-Kalmyk neighbors next door who, in many if not most cases, are not even known. Thus, though there may be troughs of varying magnitude in the social interaction network which are attributable to the existence of the separate physical areas, they do not detract from our delineation of the unit as a single, identifiable, separate and bounded social whole.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that during the period of the first emigration, the groups in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria as well as those in France appear to have lived in the same dispersed fashion within particular areas with the same characteristic pattern of interaction as is operative here today. As a matter of fact, at the turn of the century, according to informants in both the Don and Astrakhan area, the Kalmyks sometimes lived in the same residential areas or villages as the Russians, while those Kalmyks with whom one had primary social contacts might live in another village.

The area of Freewood Acres and its environs constitutes a 'cross-roads center' along one of the major highways between New York and Atlantic City. The land is flat with a thin scattering of scrub pine and mixed woodlands. Several streets have been opened on both sides of the highway. Along the highway itself there are several stores, gasoline stations and one small dress factory which comprise this 'center'. On a side street is one of the three Buddhist temples which the Kalmyks have established in America. The priests associated with this temple live in two houses contiguous to the temple. Kalmyk homes are scattered on surrounding streets (see Fig. 2). About a mile down the highway, bordering on a new housing development, is another Buddhist temple on land purchased by the Kalmyk group which maintains this temple. Several other Kalmyk families have purchased land from this group on which they have built homes. In addition, several families live in houses or on chicken farms located from one to ten miles from this area. All maintain close contact with the area, traveling back and forth by auto almost daily.

In the Philadelphia area, a large number of the families live within walking distance of one another. However, as in New Jersey, a number of families live at varying distances (up to twenty minutes by trolley car) from this area of concentration in somewhat more modern neighborhoods; but they maintain close contact with the center of concentration, in some cases traveling back and forth to shop there for necessities. There is a Kalmyk temple in this area of concentration located in one of the attached houses. One part of the house is devoted to the temple itself, while the other part comprises the living quarters of the resident priest. The religious center as a focus of the area or district of concentration was also characteristic of the emigrant communities in Eastern Europe as well as of the Don villages in Russia. Traditionally, the religious center is supposed to be situated outside of the confines of the lay community, though according to the early observers this was not always the case (Pallas 1776 II:193).

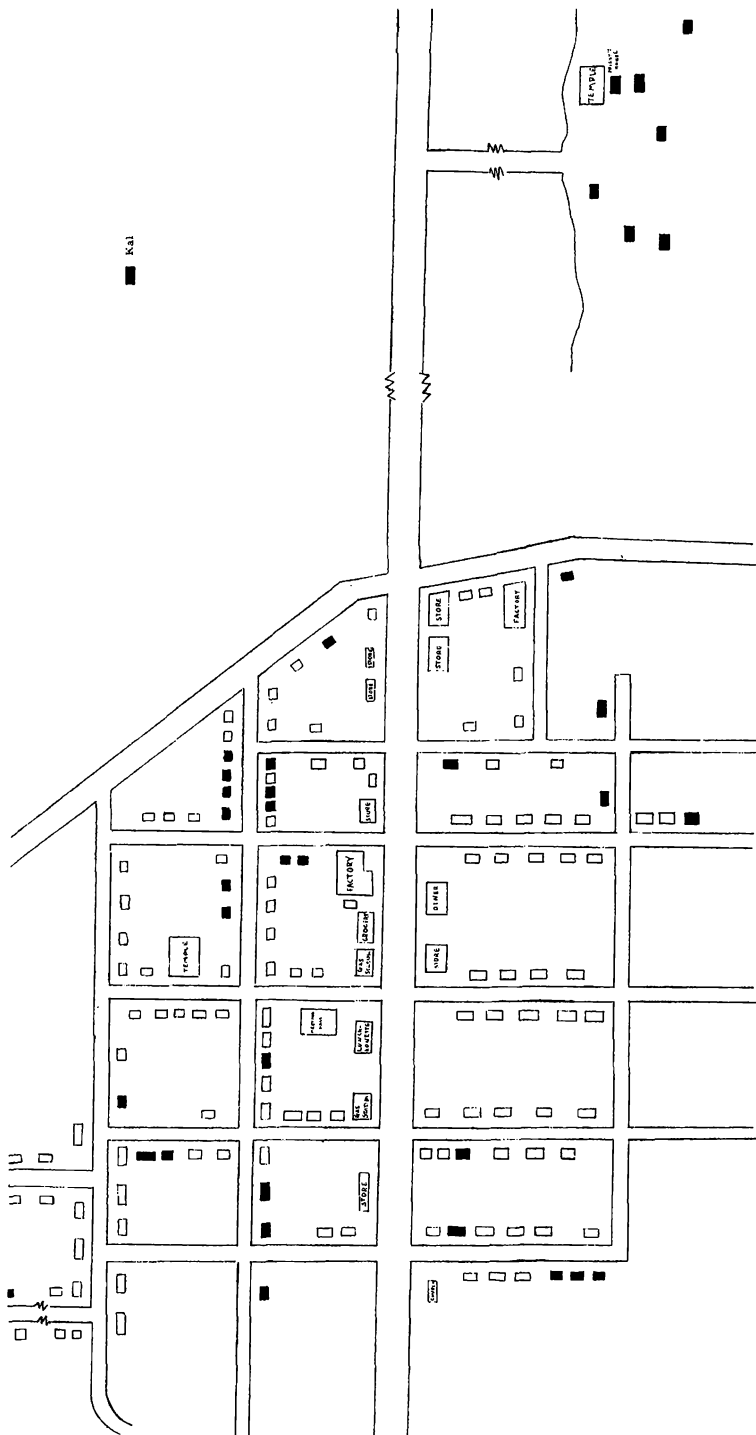
### The People

There has been one examination of the morphology and serology of the Kalmyks who have settled in the United States (Pollitzer 1962). The sample of seventy-nine subjects included male and female, old emigrés and those born in the U.S.S.R. On the basis of seven cephalic morphological measurements, the Kalmyks were characterized as brachycephalic, mesoprosopic (face of average width) and leptorrhine (long narrow nose). When these results were compared with the results of two morphological studies of the Kalmyks in the Volga area done in 1903, an appreciable morphological similarity between the Kalmyks in the Volga area in 1903 and those in the United States was evidenced (Pollitzer 1962:12). These results were then compared with those figures from a study of the Torgūt of Tarbagatai, the descendants of those Kalmyks who fled eastward to their original homeland in 1771. While the Kalmyks were found to be similar to their relatives in Central Asia, the latter were slightly larger in face, forehead and nose despite approximately equal head size.

Both of these Russian studies from 1903 included body and cephalic measurements. On the basis of the former, the Kalmyks are depicted as generally short with wide shoulders and chest and well-developed musculature, thick straight hair, wide flat face, Mongolian eye fold, dark facial skin with a tinge of yellow. Both authors present morphological evidence of Kalmyk admixture with their Russian neighbors.

The author did not undertake an investigation of the physical anthropology of the Kalmyk group in the United States. Nevertheless, her visual observations of the group support this general picture; the current range of physical type may be somewhat broader than earlier, including some individuals with brown hair, curly hair, light complexions and eyes of lighter hue and constitutes further evidence supporting admixture. This, in turn, is supported by the historical material which records the incorporation of aliens into Kalmyk social and politico-administrative units — Tatars, Kirghiz, Qazaq and even Russians. Zhitetski, in discussing the origin of the various Shabiner rod who were hereditarily attached to the monasteries, notes that in some instances they were formed earlier from Russian, Tatar and Kirghiz captives, fugitives and itinerants who entered the Kalmyk steppe. Zhitetski observes that by virtue of his own observations in the various ulus, 'those of the Shabiner rod bear the physical signs of alien admixture and among them one encounters more non-Mongolian physical types than in other rod (1892:124-5).

The serological data also presents a picture of a Mongoloid group which has admixed with other peoples from time to time. Serological samples (including those of children) were analyzed for a number of factors and then compared with the results of two earlier ABO serological studies of the Kalmyks around Astrakhan (Efremoff as quoted in Wischniewski 1928:272) and those from the right bank of the Volga (Golusko et al 1933). The results suggest that Kalmyks in the United States appear to have more A and B than their ancestors in Russia and a higher incidence of both than most Mongol populations; the frequency of B is higher than in nearly all the people in the U.S.S.R. and is exceeded by few populations of the Far East. In the Rh system, the gene frequencies of the Kalmyk sample is in accord with those characteristic of Mongoloid populations in general. The MN gene frequencies are similar to those of the Chinese and Tibetans. The results of the serological analysis show that with regard to the fifteen marker genes involved in blood typing, Kalmyks are intermediate between a 'pure' Mongol population (Chinese data) and an Eastern European population (Czech, Yugoslavian and Rumanian data) in eight of them (nine are closer to Mongolian figures, four nearer to Eastern European and two precisely equidistant), supporting the conclusion that the Kalmyks in the United States are 'genetically a predominantly Mongoloid people but that they have received through the centuries genes from other populations probably primarily Slavic peoples' (Pollitzer 1962:12-4).



## Occupations

Male. The traditional economic sphere for most Kalmyk men was pastoralism and all that pertained thereto. However by the first decades of the twentieth century, the period of earliest recollection for the most senior generation of our remnant group, knowledge of gardening and agriculture had spread to the Buzāva and Stavropol' Kalmyks and begun to spread to the Astrakhan group. Furthermore, some Kalmyks had begun to pursue professions other than army service to which the Buzāva were subject. Hence among these elderly individuals with their varied backgrounds we find divergence in their economic backgrounds as well. Those who became emigrés after the Revolution obtained diversified and sporadic employment while in Eastern Europe and, in most cases, by the time of their settlement in the United States unable to seek employment because of age and the lack of language facility or a skill.

The younger men who were born in Eastern Europe have no pastoral experience. Their past employment records reflect the degree of education attained and, more importantly, the scope of available employment. The younger men who were born in the U.S.S.R. and who left in 1943 have in some cases limited recollection of pastoral pursuits prior to collectivization but, in general, their employment backgrounds similarly reflect their education and available employment.

The types of occupation for men in the United States at present appear to relate primarily to location of residence — in urban Philadelphia or in semi-rural New Jersey. The occupations of most of the men were determined fortuitously — they merely engaged in whatever occupations were available on their arrival here. In New Jersey, the majority of the men are employed in the housebuilding trades. They are specialists in such activities as plastering, taping (sealing the sheets of plaster-board which make up the inside walls of the house), insulation and roofing. In most cases, the men are specialists in more than one craft. They seek employment most frequently on a sub-contracting basis. One Kalmyk man, with fluency in English, contacts the contractor for a particular housing job and enters into a contract with him to do the job for a specific sum of money. In some cases, he represents a two or three-man group which may frequently work together and divide the profit from the job equally. These men are very frequently consanguineally or affinally related. The groups are fluid and shift frequently by virtue of the nature of the work. Accordingly, one often hears that



A used to work with B, but the development was completed so that he is now working with C through whose different contacts he was able to get work. This does not change the factor of kinship, for as we shall see, the web of kinship is very wide. This pattern of work groups, for the most part characteristically kin determined, can be viewed in a general way as a present accommodation to the work patterns of the past when one's economic endeavors involved only kin.

Sometimes a man does not act in a representative capacity but as a sub-contractor who hires additional men at a salary. He is the 'boss'. Sub-contracting of this type seems to be preferred to regular salaried employment by house-building firms because of the flat rate for the job and by the workers because of the opportunity to make more money if one works hard and for long hours, thereby permitting the undertaking of more contracts. In a period of lull in the house-building trades, this may work against the Kalmyks because few jobs are available. As a result, some have recently sought direct regular salaried employment from the builder, though the preference still appears to be for sub-contracting which offers more independence of action.

Because of the seasonal nature of the building trades, many Kalmyks apply for unemployment compensation during the winter months when they are unable to work. This maintains them until the spring when work begins again. It is interesting to observe that during the summer months, net income is used to increase payments on the mortgage or to buy a new car or other merchandise rather than to equalize the winter income. The regularity of the compensation checks, the ability to meet basic expenses and the earnings of the wife together justify in their minds this method of household management. For example, fuel bills may accumulate during the winter months until the spring when the man of the house returns to work and pays them all in one or two payments. The fuel oil distributor, knowing that he will eventually receive payment, never presses for the payment of his bills, though three, four or more months of bills may accumulate.

It is also interesting to discern the similarity of this male work cycle to pastoral work cycles. Both are characterized by intense activity in the spring, summer and fall during which time the men may work six or seven days a week, ten to fourteen hours a day in order to get the 'job' done; and a very low rate of work activity in the winter.

Some of the men living in New Jersey, primarily Torgūt, are not employed in the building trades but were, until recently,

employed in a local rug factory which has since moved its place of business to a southern state. Some of these men have now gone into the building trades, while one or two have remained in the factory as caretakers. Several other men, usually older with slight command of English, are employed as gardeners and maintenance men at a cemetery about fifty miles north. These men return to their homes only on week-ends. One man runs a local travel and gift parcel agency in Lakewood.

Those who live and work in the urban areas of Paterson, New Brunswick and Philadelphia in most cases have skilled and semi-skilled factory jobs in various soft goods industries and mechanical trades; less than 20% are employed in white-collar work. Kalmyk entrepreneurs are few, but one man runs a grocery and another is a partner in a parcel service in Philadelphia. In most cases they do not seem to work in groups but as individuals, necessitating a greater facility with the English language. Sometimes this is not necessary if other men on the job know one of the several other languages with which the Kalmyks are acquainted such as Russian, German or Serbian. One man living outside Philadelphia tends the horses at a local military school.

As can be seen, the range of current male occupations appears to have no relation to employment experience prior to the Kalmyks' arrival in the United States. In most cases, those men who had a higher education in Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R., including the small number with college degrees, and in a few cases doctorates in Slavic studies and professional degrees in the fields of dentistry and veterinary medicine, were unable to utilize their specialized knowledge in the United States — either because of the language barrier or because of the special licenses needed for the various professions. They turned to any position that was available, some finding positions as clerks while others entered the building or mechanical trades. Some of these men are no longer employable because of age or chronic illness. Other 'old emigré' men had worked as carters between the wars; still others appeared to have worked only sporadically, depending primarily on the income of their wives earned by sewing bundles of clothing at home. The men sometimes assisted in this work or managed the minor enterprise. In many cases, particularly that of the younger men between the ages of twenty and thirty, the chaotic nature of their early years in Germany and in the United States prevented them from obtaining sufficient education or training for any particular type of work. One of the reasons for the popularity of the building trades in New Jersey

was the tremendous increase, at the time of their arrival, in development construction in the area in which they settled and the ensuing availability of jobs requiring a type of specialization which could be easily learned and in which their earnings were limited only by their inability or lack of desire to work long hours. Furthermore, the ability to work without knowing much English, as long as a spokesman was available, favored this type of occupation for middle-aged men with little command of English.

Female. In New Jersey, most of the working women are employed as seamstresses in the dressmaking industry, though one or two work as egg candlers. Wherever there are older children or where either member of the older generation is part of the household, the younger woman usually works in a dress factory. The employment of women outside of the home in many cases does not seem to be related to need, for in many cases the husband's income amply covers what we would consider normal expenses. However, women work only for the income which is used for various present as well as future expenditures which the Kalmyks see as necessary and important. (Details discussed in the section on Home Economics.)

Because of the nature of the dressmaking industry and the existence of the union shop, most of the women have become union members. Though they enjoy the benefits of the union in terms of wages, disability payments and vacation allowances, their participation is of a passive nature, involving only the payment of dues. There are several non-union shops in the area, and when work is scarce, the women work there too, despite the fact that this is against union regulations. There is some movement from job to job as the result of frequent layoffs and the seasonal nature of the work.

One woman in New Brunswick has gone into business for herself. She has become a sub-contractor, employing other Kalmyks and Russians as seamstresses. She also subcontracts work to some of the women in Freewood Acres. She has been here for only two years, a much shorter time than most of the other women. She was born in Paris and is very dynamic and has an intense desire to get ahead, to make money and someday, perhaps, to be able to afford the luxuries which her sophistication demands. She has a good command of English and handled almost all the negotiations concerning the setting up of the business herself; her husband, who has other employment, assists to some extent, but it is she who runs the business.

In Philadelphia, another woman operates a grocery store by herself, handling all of the business details. Her husband, who is employed in a factory, assists her in a minor way with the heavy physical work but does not participate actively in the business. This woman previously had a small business in Germany while living in the displaced persons camp. She sold apples, fruits and candies which served as supplements to the staples distributed by the camp authorities. When she came here, she worked in a factory in order to accumulate the necessary capital to start her business. Many women in Philadelphia work as seamstresses or in some type of factory work such as making cigars or candy. Some of the younger girls who completed their high school education here have clerical positions. One woman works as a bookkeeper.

The overwhelming predominance of sewing as an occupation for women employed outside of the house, despite the presence of numerous alternatives, in all likelihood relates to the fact that sewing has always been a very important part of the female's household duties. In Russia, the women made all of the clothing for the family in the home, and today most women still sew most of their own and their children's clothing, even making such items as pajamas and underwear as well as curtains, draperies and slip-covers. There is still some remembrance from the past of women sewing clothing from skins. Those women who lived in the Balkans between the wars worked in their homes on 'bundles', sewing the pieces brought from the factory into finished trousers and then returning the garments to the factory. They were paid on the basis of the number of bundles sewn. In many cases, the family was supported primarily by money earned in this way, supplemented by the man's earnings during sporadic employment. Girls were taught to sew at a young age. Several informants recalled that at a tender age they helped by sewing on the smaller pieces of the garment. After the war, a factory was set up in one of the displaced persons camps and many women worked there sewing clothes which were used by the camp population. Thus, the most logical employment for the women when they arrived here was sewing. Moreover, there were fewer language barriers involved in this work since many of the factory owners, their managers and floor ladies spoke Russian or German, languages which the Kalmyks also speak.

#### The Residence Unit: Family Composition

An analysis of the material collected concerning residence units and family composition is summarized below in categories which

have been established as meaningful for this body of data. This categorization enables us to perceive the range of characteristics of Kalmyk household composition. The data covers most but not all of the population elements of the Kalmyk group.<sup>2</sup>

With the exclusion of the category of single men the family, whether nuclear or extended, is usually coterminous with the household or residence unit. In the case of single men, groups of two or three often maintain a single household. (The living arrangements of the celibate priests will be discussed below in connection with the discussion of religion.) The household maintains one budget, one kitchen and operates as a single visiting and gift-giving unit in important ceremonial and ritual contexts. Figure 2 shows the numerical breakdown of families into the various descriptive types. The nuclear family — category A — is here defined as being composed of husband and wife, or widowed parent, and their unmarried children. The extended family is defined in its broadest context and includes any residential unit with either a senior parental generation (one or both members), unmarried children (True Extended — Category B1.); a senior parental generation (one or both members), their unmarried children and one married child and his or her family of procreation (the other married children having moved off) (Stem — Category B2) and a later phase in the development of Category B2 where all the children have married and moved off except one, who, with his family of procreation remains with the parental generation. This is Category B3 or Late Stem. The distinction between Categories B2 and B3 which are merely two different points in the development of a single type is made in order to show the importance of this distinction for certain features and characteristics regarding extended units which will be discussed below. The categories were also examined from the point of view of the locus of authority in decision making, which is defined as being coterminous with primacy in decision making, in control of finances and in household management.

In the nuclear family, the locus of authority clearly rests with the parental generation, both husband and wife. This is also the case for the true extended and for the regular stem (B2) categories. For example, in all of these categories, the monies earned by the various members of the family — including the married children and their spouses — are turned over to the head of the household, who determines its allocation. In the late stem category, Category A (see Fig. 4) we find that in some cases authority is clearly in the filial generation. Though great respect is accorded the older generation, the actual locus of authority in terms of our definition

Figure 3. Household Composition

Type of Residence Unit	Freewood Acres & New Jersey		Philadelphia	
I. Households of single men				
A. Clerical	3		1-priest	
B. Non-Clerical	<u>6</u>		<u>3</u>	
		9		4
II. Families				
A. Nuclear				
1. Husband-Wife	23		34	
2. Widowed Parent	<u>4</u>		<u>2</u>	
		27		36
(Related nuclear families living contiguously, i.e., next door, but otherwise separate.)				
		(3 pairs)		(2 pairs)
B. 'Extended' Families				
1. True Extended	1		0	
2. Stem	1		2	
3. Late Stem	<u>12</u>		<u>9</u>	
		14		11

Figure 4. Further Breakdown of 'Late Stem'

A. Authority clearly in filial generation				
1. Parental generation from husband's side				
Father	2		0	
Mother	0		1	
Both	0		1	
Senior male relative	1		0	
2. Parental generation from wife's side				
Father	2		0	
Mother	1		1	
Both	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	
		6		3
B. Authority divided between filial and parental generation				
1. Parental generation from husband's side				
Father	0		0	
Mother	3		2	
Both	1		0	
2. Parental generation from wife's side				
Father	0		0	
Mother	1		1	
Both	<u>1</u>		<u>3</u>	
		6		6

rests in the younger generation. In this category, the senior generation consists of very old women who are unable to participate in household management and older men who are either too old or too infirm to work or unable to find employment because of age or lack of language facility. They do not fit into the new employment milieu and, as a result, actual authority and control have passed to the younger men.

In category B in the breakdown of Late Stem, the locus of authority is in a sense divided between the members of both generations. In seven of these cases, only the female of the senior generation is resident. In every one of these cases, she maintains some degree of control over the household, fulfilling the vital functions of child care and household management, while the younger women go to work. The senior female together with the man of the house may maintain control over the purse strings. These features are particularly prominent if the senior female is the mother of the husband of the household rather than the mother of the wife. In the other cases in this category, where both parents of the senior generation were present, it appeared that either the locus of authority was divided or was not clear-cut in the sense that both generations seem to have had equal say in most family matters, or else the authority had shifted to the younger male who was gainfully employed and supported the family. However, the senior male continued to command much respect and lip service was paid to his expressions of authority even though he might be wholly out of the economic milieu. The older female in these cases still retains her position of authority in the household.

The figures indicate that the neolocal nuclear family unit predominates over the household which includes any kind of extended family. Informant data indicates that there is a tendency for the true extended units to break up. More of these units are said to have existed in Bulgaria and in the United States immediately after the Kalmyks' arrival here. In the latter case, it was explained that need kept such units together. However it is interesting to note, for example, that the units of one such extended family that did split now live in contiguous houses on a plot of land they own in common. In the single case of the true extended family during the period of the author's field work, there was some talk that one of the two married sons would move off and maintain himself and his family separately, but this did not occur. An analysis of newly married couples (see Fig 5) also shows a tendency toward neolocal residence. Of the four cases cited where couples did not reside neolocally, only

one included more than one married child and his family (this is the single case of the true extended family); the others were, in reality, stem families — other married children having moved off.

Figure 5. Residence of Couples Married between 1957 and 1960

Neolocal	6	(all located in urban settings — Philadelphia, Pa., Paterson, N. J., Washington, D. C.)
No permanent residence as yet (husband in army or at school)	2	
Residence with parents of		
Husband	2	
Wife	2	

According to our data, the number of children per Kalmyk family varies from four to seven; few families have less than three. The genealogies collected indicate that the range of family size does not seem to have changed within the past five or six generations. Infant mortality obviously kept the size of families stable in the past and some form of birth control is now performing the same function.

From our historical evidence, we know that traditionally the true extended family or joint family was the preferred form being coterminous with the *xoton* or nomadic camp. Older Buzāva and Astrakhan informants' descriptions of their household units during the time of their youth indicate the continued maintenance of this pattern up to the Revolution. When the extended family grew too large, it was eventually broken up and component parts moved off to form their own households. In fact, the ancient *Tsaadjin Bichik* notes the possibility of a son's demanding his share of the herd on his reaching majority, indicating the possibility of an early split in the extended family; the ideal, however, was to keep the family unit together as long as possible (Pallas 1776:200).

In order to correctly assess this apparent shift from the extended family as a preferred form to the predominance of the neolocal nuclear type along with some stem families, we must keep in mind the fragmentary nature of the group. In most cases, only individuals or isolated nuclear families participated in the exodus during the Revolution or the subsequent one concurrent with the



retreat of the Germans. Furthermore, during the thirties, the government of the U.S.S.R. had attempted to break up the conglomerates of kin, fostering a trend toward the nuclear family as a predominant type. In our discussion of social structure in Chapters V and VII, we will see the accommodations that are being made today in order to perpetuate the wide range of kinship of which the extended family type was the foundation.

### Housing

Kalmyk homes here are varied. In New Jersey, many families live in new ranch-type or split-level American style houses with four to eight rooms and containing all the latest electrical appliances, including, among other things, refrigerators with freezers, television sets, wall ovens, steam irons, air conditioners, electric sewing machines and some clothes washers (see Plate 5). In most cases, the Kalmyks have built these new homes in their spare time with the help of relatives and friends, utilizing the knowledge and experience that they have gained in their employment in the construction industry (see Plate 5). This type of assistance is evidence of the continued maintenance of the mutual aid relationships traditionally maintained between actual as well as fictive kin relations. Kalmyks living in older houses have in many cases rebuilt the outside so as to present a more modern appearance, while the older interior remains the same.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes a new modern annex, in effect a new house, is built onto the old house, the latter eventually being razed.

In Philadelphia too the Kalmyks usually own their own homes. These are two and three-story buildings attached on both sides which are characteristic of this older section of the city. As one travels along the streets of this area, one sees row upon row of these houses with their small three-step stoops. Few alterations can be made to their exteriors; however, alterations are often made to the interiors to suit the family's needs. The Kalmyks, in general, continually strive to improve their dwellings.

Almost all Kalmyks own their own homes which range in value from several thousand dollars for older homes to \$15,000 more for newer, larger homes. It is felt to be 'natural' for a person to own his home as the desire to own one's own home is very strong. (Homes were not purchased by the 'old emigres' during their sojourn in the Balkans because of lack of credit facilities.) When mortgage money is used to finance the building of a new house,



Plate 5

A Kalmyk home in the final stage of completion, 1961.

the aim is to pay it off as soon as possible by paying as much as one can each month in addition to the stipulated monthly payment. In cases where the newly married couple plans to reside neolocally, a down payment on a house is usually included in the provisions made by the bride's family for the couple at the time of the marriage.

Interestingly, the furnishings and interiors of most homes display a remarkable similarity of taste. One finds the same style of furniture if not the exact duplicate models for the living room, dining room and bedroom in many houses in both New Jersey and Philadelphia. This style — commercially termed modern — is the type of 'high fashion' furniture usually advertised and sold by large-scale, low-price metropolitan furniture stores. Sectional sofas, large, low end tables and tall modern lamps, and carpeting in the living room are standard items as well as dining room furniture including glass-doored cabinets to house and display sets of decorative glassware and decanters which people give as wedding gifts. In fact, the furniture is often purchased by many families from the same dealer, who is of Slavic origin, in Philadelphia. Especially at weddings, when it is traditional to provide the bride with gifts of all the necessary household effects and furnishings, one sees clearly this repetition of style and of the kinds of gifts felt necessary and desirable. These items range from furniture, new refrigerators, television sets and vacuum cleaners — characteristic of our own culture — to items which appear to be modern editions of those characteristic of other cultures with whom the Kalmyks have come into contact, such as electrified samovars and a certain type of heavy wall tapestry which is also very popular with recent Eastern European immigrants.

Thus, with the exception of an occasional picture of a horse or an equestrian scene and the burxan, the house-hold shrine (discussed below), there are no material reminders of the nomadic pastoral past in the present Kalmyk house or furnishings; they have readily and almost completely adopted the material milieu of the host culture.

### The Domestic Sphere: Family Life

As previously discussed, during the nomadic pastoral period, the domestic sphere was the domain primarily of the women and was managed by them with the occasional assistance of the men of the house and the older children. After marriage, the young couple lived with the groom's family. A relationship of intense respect

characterized the behavior between the young wife and all males senior to her husband. She had to rise at the time of their entering or of their leaving and she had to withdraw backwards when they were present. The daughter-in-law could eat her meals only after her father-in-law, husband and other senior males had eaten (Mol'kov 1928:292). She was not allowed to bare her head in their presence. The young wife, or berä, together with the resident wives of other married brothers constituted the household labor force, directed by the senior female of the household, the mother, who exercised full power over household affairs. This is characteristic of the economic structure of the joint family. According to one old female Buzäva informant who recounted her experience after marriage when she went to live with her husband's family, the berä, under the direction of her mother-in-law did the domestic work, even working with the animals, milking them and making čigan, a fermented milk drink, and cheese. In her own words, they worked like 'slaves'. The senior woman was, according to some reports, the custodian of the household funds. Her husband and her sons consulted her on such important matters as the choice of possible marriage partners. Informant data concerning life during the first emigration indicates that in addition to the full burden of the household, the sewing of bundles made the women in some cases the sole supporters of the family.

Responsibility for the household today is still largely with the women. The other members of the family also participate in one way or another in household activities as in the past. Children, male and female, younger and older, all have various chores to do around the house. In the households where there is no senior female and the mother works during the day, the tasks are performed by the children, and in effect, constitute the routine physical maintenance of the house. Boys and girls may participate equally and there is no apparent stigma attached to male children doing housework. During those periods of the year when the man of the house may be unemployed while the wife is working, the man will sometimes prepare supper for the household or help with some of the heavy housework. In the case of the older men, their help is confined primarily to cooking some of the traditional Kalmyk dishes or carving meat, bought in bulk, into cooking portions; while the younger men may sometimes help by waxing floors.

In the categories which we deemed true extended families and stem families where authority is in the senior parental generation, all income earned by the various members of the family, sons,

daughters-in-law and those monies earned by other family enterprises are turned over to the father in toto. Food purchases are made for the group as a whole even though in one instance a separate kitchen was maintained. Money for other necessities must be requested from the senior generation, male or female or both, depending on the type of item. At weddings or during the annual celebration of Tsagan Sar, the group gives one gift as a single unit, rather than separate gifts from each sub-family. In other words, the household in its gift-giving capacity, which is important in a ceremonial and ritual context, is regarded as a single whole. (Thus, a further criterion for distinguishing related nuclear families living contiguously from extended families is the unit's gift-giving practices.)

Within the generation possessing the authority, the female appears to have an important voice in all family affairs. She is consulted on major matters, purchases and on economic decisions. Her opinion is often followed, though outwardly action appears to be the result of the man's decision. In Stem category families where the senior generation is elderly, we find that because of the inability of most elderly males to function successfully in the present economic milieu, much of their real authority in day-to-day decision-making passes of necessity to their sons, while they continue to retain the great respect which has always been accorded them. On the other hand, the older female is still able to operate more successfully in her traditional domain, the household which has in some ways shielded her from the influences of the host culture; and, accordingly, she tends to retain much more of her dominance and authority in the household, particularly if it is the household of her son. However, this dominance by the senior female can and is being challenged as the incident recounted below seems to indicate.

The husband of the senior female, A, died several years ago. The son, B, and wife, C, had lived with the senior couple since the time of their marriage right after the war. C worked while A took care of the children and maintained the household. To some extent, A also controlled the household funds. Tension existed between A and C. A felt that she was overworked and had no time to rest and that C should stay at home and help take care of the house and the children as there was no financial need for C to work. C's brother also lived in the house though he had other close relatives. A felt that he should move out. A also felt that C was unfriendly and did not treat B's relatives as she should. She was not friendly

toward them and was glum when they came to visit thereby not demonstrating traditional Kalmyk hospitality. She was said to dislike visiting other people; this was also seen as a fault.

Matters came to a head over a minor incident and A walked out of the house in an act of protest and went to live with her daughter several blocks away. As a result, C had to leave her job and stay at home to take care of the children and the house. In the meantime, B visited his mother every day, asking her to return home. He felt that it was a poor reflection on him if she did not return, for his parents had always lived with them as tradition dictated. Community opinion, as could be expected, favored A, holding C to be in the wrong — in keeping with the traditional view of the roles of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law vis-a-vis one another.

However, people also noted that because C had only two younger brothers, there were no older members of her family available to stand up for her so that in the end A would have her way. Traditionally, the presence of the wife's relatives acted as a mediating force protecting the rights of the wife and preventing her ill treatment at the hands of the husband's family. Finally, after a week, C came to A, apologized and asked her to come home. C stopped working and remained at home taking over much of A's burden but not the direction of the household.

From this little incident, we may gain some insights into what may be the beginning of a shift in authority and dominance in the household. The mother as a member of the senior generation is no longer completely dominant in the household of her son. She had to leave her son's house in protest in order to successfully subdue her daughter-in-law and have her way. In the past, such action on the part of the mother would not have been necessary. She would automatically have had her way in all matters. A did gain her objective in the end, indicating that the traditional pattern of attitude still persists though it is somewhat weakened. During Tsagan Sar and in other ceremonial contexts, we shall see that respect for one's elders is still formally reiterated in ceremony even though in actual situations the authority formerly backing this respect may in some instances have been lost. However, the strong respect relationship between junior and senior can still be said to be a motivating force in Kalmyk society.

In nuclear family households, husband and wife appear to have equal say in most family matters. To the outside world, however, it is felt that the husband should appear to be the 'boss'. The man

of the house is independent in terms of his time and activities; however, this is not the case for the women. There have been several incidents reported of stringent control of the wife by the husband, more rarely wife-beating. Marriages in many if not most cases are still arranged by parents or other senior relatives, though there has always been the traditional alternative of elopement. A consequence of arranged marriages is the female's strong devotion to and indulgence in her children to the exclusion at times of her husband. This is frequently noted by many female informants who state: 'Children are always first, husband second'. The continued preponderance of arranged marriages also reaffirms our previous discussion of the continued influence in general of the senior generation over the junior generation.

Home Finances. The income of practically all families seems to fall within a fairly narrow range. According to male informants, those engaged in seasonal occupations sometimes earn as much as \$200.00 per week, at other times much less and at still other times they are out of work completely, collecting only unemployment payments. It is therefore difficult to compute total annual income. This was also true for female income. Those employed in union shops would make from \$70.00 to \$100.00 per week, (somewhat less in non-union shops), while during the period of unemployment they collected only \$50.00 in unemployment compensation. If both husband and wife were working, yearly income might range from \$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00 including unemployment compensation. Their stated aim is to earn as much as possible working as hard as possible.

The additional income gained from long hours, overtime, and the employment of women outside the home enables the family to buy more expensive gifts which it feels it is required to present at the frequent weddings that take place throughout the year and for the large expenditures made in connection with the Tsagan Sar celebration which will be discussed in detail below. These may not constitute necessary or even normal expenses in terms of the host culture but they do in terms of Kalmyk culture. The desire to make a better life for their children than they (who for the most part attained maturity during World War II and afterwards in the displaced persons camps) experienced, is cited by informants as an additional reason for the wife working and for the husband seeking extra work. Finally, the desire to accumulate the more readily available material goods which in the host culture constitute wealth is also cited.

Interestingly, they state that these material goods were unavailable to them for a long period of time. Actually, these material goods which are now being accumulated such as cars, television sets, refrigerators and other similar items were never before available to the Kalmyks. What constituted wealth or its display among them during the period prior to the Revolution, in addition to their economic wealth in flocks of animals, were items such as dresses made of the skins of unborn colts, which were presented as gifts to brides, Russian samovars, gold jewelry, clothing made of expensive materials and fur coats. During the period of sojourn in Eastern Europe and the concomitant period of revolution in Russia and, subsequently, during World War II and its aftermath economic conditions worsened and there were no surplus monies available with which to buy non-essential or luxury items. However, in America, surplus income was available if one worked hard and a plethora of non-essential material goods could be accumulated. While a shift has occurred in terms of those goods which constitute the symbols of material wealth, as we shall see, there have not been major changes in the traditional ceremonial uses for wealth nor in its significance vis-a-vis the social structure.

Many individuals built their homes themselves with the help of the unpaid labor of their relatives. A new house valued at \$15,000 thus cost them only the price of the materials plus the cost of installing utilities which totalled much less than the amount the house was worth. The cost of the materials and land is usually paid for in part with the family's accumulated monetary surplus, being covered by an open-end bank mortgage. Most families also own late model cars or station wagons. One or two Kalmyks own their own farms, and several very enterprising individuals own more than one farm or more than one house, renting them to others.

Though Kalmyks readily labor for each other without charge, personal loans of money are not usual, for it seems to be a matter of pride and self-esteem to conduct one's own monetary affairs with the bank. When necessary, personal loans may be made, usually among close relatives and without interest. Nevertheless, loans from the bank appear to be preferable. The great majority do have mortgages on their homes, and according to informant data so far there appear to have been no foreclosures, nor any individuals having credit problems. The Kalmyks are considered to be good credit risks as they repay their debts as soon as they are able, so they will not be 'beholden'. They dislike purchasing items 'on time' unless necessary; for there are additional hidden costs involved in time purchases and they don't like to have debts.



Food and Diet. Shopping for food is usually done once a week at the local supermarket on Friday night or Saturday morning, after pay day. Such purchases cover a broad range of items including canned goods, meats and dairy products. These are usually supplemented by milk purchases at a local grocery store and periodic purchases of the hind quarters of freshly killed lamb from local itinerant meat peddlers. (Shopping practices are those observed in Freewood Acres. In Philadelphia, shopping is done either in the local Kalmyk grocery or in a supermarket.)

There is some variation in cuisine between the Buzāva and the Astrakhan Kalmyks. The latter appear to be more restricted in their diet, adhering in the main to the more limited range of traditional Kalmyk dishes; while the former have taken on in addition various Russian dishes such as bliny (thin pancakes), boršč, šči, xolodec (jellied meat similar to headcheese) as well as a few dishes from the Balkan countries where they lived for a generation, such as goulash and fave (a dish with meat and kidney beans). However, meat and cheese still predominate in the diet, while vegetables, potatoes and salads are eaten to a lesser extent.

Most of the traditional dishes continue as part of Kalmyk cuisine today although in many instances they are served only on ceremonial occasions. The most popular continues to be Kalmyk tea which is now made from an infusion of tea, evaporated milk, nutmeg and butter. In many homes, a large pot of Kalmyk tea is kept on the stove at all times of the year (in the summer, it is served cold), and whenever someone comes into the house, he is immediately served a cup. It is used as a ceremonial drink as well, and it is served at most rites. Borts'k (börtsag), the small cakes made of flour, water and yeast and fried in oil, are still made, but primarily for use at various ceremonials and rites. Maken, made from lamb in the traditional way — that is, boiled in water, cut up into pieces and mixed with fresh cut onions and a little shulen (the lamb stock) and rewarmed — is also prepared on festive occasions. Budan, a stew of lamb meat, water and flour, and bulmuk, a gravy-like dish of broth and flour are also still prepared. Čigan — fermented cow's milk — is at present made and drunk primarily by the older people. It is felt to have great therapeutic value and is believed to insure a long life. Its counterpart, Kumis, made from fermented mare's milk, is no longer made because of the unavailability of mare's milk. Though arki is no longer distilled from milk, vodka (preferably Russian vodka) has taken its place in ceremonial as well as social contexts and it is now referred to as arki.

Another dish, varen'k, the counterpart of Chinese boiled dumplings, is also a favorite. This dish apparently has a pan-Mongolian and Central Asian as well as an Eastern European distribution, as the author has eaten varen'k at the home of an Eastern Mongol and has seen it being prepared for the brother of the Dalai Lama. Rice is also prepared occasionally but it is not a staple item of the diet. The traditional ceremonial pilaf consisting of rice, raisins and sugar, is eaten by those breaking their fast at the end of Matsaq. Some American dishes have been adopted by the younger women. They use canned spaghetti and macaroni and ready-made bread, and one or two even use cake mixes. Thus knowledge of traditional Kalmyk cuisine has persisted though in some instances it has been utilized primarily in ceremonial contexts; the dishes from cultures with whom the group has had contact become additions to the diet rather than replacements for Kalmyk dishes.

Clothing. As previously noted, much of the women's and children's clothing is made in the home. The styles are always modern, reflecting a knowledge of fashion which the women have gained through their outside occupation. Frequently, they will take a dress pattern home from the factory and copy it; sometimes they will copy from magazines. Except for the absence of red and yellow which are prohibited from use by the laity by virtue of their being the colors of the clothing of the clergy, their clothing is fashionable and characteristic of our own culture.

The traditional formal female dress, the tseg'deg, is still worn by the bride as a part of the ceremony associated with her marriage, and its style accords with that depicted by Pallas. This dress is given as a gift to her by the relatives of her new husband and is always made with great care. The dress is not used for other occasions, though as noted in Chapter III it was in the past the everyday dress of the married female, and one can see pictures of it in the early accounts of travelers who visited the Kalmyks.

Male dress is typically American and store-bought; clerical garb has remained the same.

Child-rearing practices. Children are greatly desired by the Kalmyks. Traditionally, the most frequent cause of divorce was childlessness. Usually the first child is born within the first or second year of marriage, the others being born at intervals of one or two years. By the time the wife is thirty she has given birth to from three to five children, at which time child-bearing most frequently ceases. There is some control of the size of the family. Although this subject was not explored in detail,

several informants indicated that abstention rather than contraception is employed to limit the size of the family. Our genealogical and informant data indicate that at the turn of the century, the birth rate was higher, as was infant mortality. Inasmuch as the size of the family appears to have remained constant since that time, it must be presumed that some form of birth-control is practiced.

Today, children are usually born in hospitals, though the woman may not see a physician or go to a clinic until close to what she calculates will be the date for birth. Though some preference is shown for a male child, the birth of a female is also considered an occasion for celebration. If the first child is a female rather than a male, the thought is frequently expressed that succeeding brothers will have an older sister who will look after them when they are young.

After the birth of a child, the priest is consulted for the selection of a suitable name for the child. A religious rite of ceremonial washing the baby (to be described below) is performed within a month or so after the birth and frequently is the cause for a celebration. At this time or within the first few months thereafter, relatives and friends pay visits — 'baby erjalg'x' or 'baby erjanav' (to wish well for the baby). Gifts are brought for the baby or money given and, in addition, a visitor may bring some vodka and cookies. If a celebration is held in connection with the religious rite, the new parents usually provide vodka, Kalmyk tea and maken (meat) for all. The birth of a baby thus provides an opportunity for visiting and gift presentation.

Within a month or two after the birth, the mother who is not breast-feeding the baby may return to work if her mother or mother-in-law is part of the household. Thus, in such cases, it is the older woman who in effect rears the child.

Breast feeding, formerly the usual practice, has now been superseded in many cases, and even those children who are breast fed are weaned at about six months; in prior generations they were not weaned until two or three years or even later. During the early months of life, the diet of a child who is not breast-fed includes milk, tea and soup. Children do not appear to be placed on solid diets until they are ten months to a year old, though they may be given crusts of bread on which to chew. Kalmyk children appear to have a somewhat more rapid rate of physical development than American children and they frequently walk unaided when they are ten months to a year old. Toilet training seems to start earlier. The author has observed children as young as six months old being placed on little pots and being kept there until they have had a bowel movement.

Babies and young children are normally given a great deal of affectionate attention by adults and older siblings. If they exhibit temper tantrum behavior when they do not get what they want, adults rush to placate them with anything available. The behavior towards children may be characterized in general as permissive and unrestrained, thus maintaining continuity with the past.

Kalmyk is usually the first language learned by the children since it is the language normally spoken in the home. As children grow older, their growing vocabulary becomes infused with many English expressions, and by the time they reach school age, they are usually bi-lingual. They speak Kalmyk to their grandparents and parents, and usually they speak English or sometimes Kalmyk to their brothers and sisters and to their contemporaries.

There is a conscious effort on the part of most parents and grandparents to have their children know Kalmyk. Those children who have attained a good proficiency in the language are pointed to with pride. From time to time efforts toward more formal education for the children in Kalmyk language, religion and culture have resulted in the setting up of 'Sunday schools' under the aegis of the clergy. However, various difficulties have prevented them from being permanently maintained. Such schools were set up in Bulgaria by the 'old emigrés' with somewhat more sustained success.

Children living in Freewood Acres are more proficient in the Kalmyk language than those living in Philadelphia. This may relate to the fact that in Freewood Acres, children's play groups are composed predominantly of Kalmyk children — Kalmyk oftentimes being used for communication within these groups — while this is frequently not the case in Philadelphia. Moreover, a large proportion of Kalmyks living in Freewood Acres are Astrakhan and they pride themselves on their purity of language. They desire to perpetuate their language and see it as an integral part of their heritage.

The Kalmyk children attend local public schools. The caliber of work is said to rank with that of the rest of the school population. In the lower grades, behavior and personal problems are infrequent. In the adolescent group, there appears to be a problem of the reconciliation of the values and customs of the home with the demands of the peer group. However, this conflict between generations exists for children of other immigrant groups in the school population as well and, to some extent, for all adolescents.<sup>4</sup>

School problems which may occur during the adolescent period sometime necessitate bringing the Kalmyk parents into contact with school authorities. For the most part, these situations are usually

successfully resolved. Aside from these necessary contacts, the Kalmyks do not participate in school affairs or attend parent-teacher meetings. For example, when a program about the Kalmyks was to be planned by the local parent-teachers association, no one participated or showed any interest in attending the meeting or in interacting with the local non-Kalmyk population. Language was not a barrier since the majority of the parents with school-age children speak English. Nor does this reflect a lack of interest in their children's schooling. They are concerned with their children's problems; they encourage their children to attain good grades and they reward their children's achievements. Rather, it is a reiteration of their separation from and lack of interaction with the surrounding host culture.

Most of the young people who were of secondary school age when the group came to this country have graduated from high school. Almost all Kalmyk children complete high school and a few, usually boys, go on to college. Parents stress the importance of education and feel that a college education is desirable and appear to be willing to make economic sacrifices in order to enable their children to attain this academic goal. Most Kalmyk men and women who have come to the United States have had at least primary school educations, some going as far as gymnasium or high school and others (primarily male) even higher. Some intellectuals express the view that higher education will enable Kalmyks to more knowledgeably preserve their cultural heritage, and, therefore, parents should, if necessary, make sacrifices to enable their children to obtain a college education.

Kalmyk children participate in the visiting and social interaction along with their parents. Even babies are normally taken along on visits and to ceremonies. At the Don Kalmyk temple, for example, they and their mothers may sit in the priests' house during the rite and engage only in the celebration which takes place afterwards. At weddings it is usual to find several young mothers and their babies sitting with the bride during the feasting and celebration, while other children scurry about. Children usually go along on all the ceremonial visits of the Tsagan Sar celebration, receiving gifts of coins or dollar bills. In this way, they become familiar with the customs and rituals of their people and cognizant of the individuals with whom their parents have close and more distant social relations as well as the category of these relationships. Kalmyk adolescents also participate in the formal program of entertainment at the annual ball in celebration of Tsagan Sar,

performing traditional Kalmyk songs and dances which have been taught to them by their elders. In this way, their knowledge of and interest in their Kalmyk heritage is furthered.

### Health and Disease

The Kalmyks by and large are a healthy people. The present group includes a senior generation many of whom are in their seventies and eighties. The tradition of a hardy life is still alive. One individual of middle age related that his young children were washed with cold water from the time they were infants, and that they slept in unheated rooms in winter, thereby making them hardy. Another reason for the popularity of the house-building trades among the Kalmyks may relate to their traditional love of the outdoors and the opportunity to labor outside which this type of work affords them.

Though no epidemiological study of the Kalmyks has been made, the range of diseases to which they are subject seems to conform to that of the host culture. However, they themselves note a higher incidence of gall bladder difficulties among women which might relate to diet.

Today, reliance is placed primarily on Western medical practitioners for treatment of illness and disease. Nevertheless, as noted below in connection with the religious aspects of medical treatment, the services of the Tibetan-trained religious medical practitioner (the emči) and of the other clerics are often utilized in concert with Western medical science, or sometimes as a last resort. The emči's herbal remedies are still employed by some, primarily the elderly. The dietary advice, blessed water and special prayers of the other clerics, is also sought. One man in the group is familiar with the setting of broken bones as traditionally practiced by the ototši, and he is consulted from time to time concerning bone bruises and dislocations.

### Hospitality

Traditional Kalmyk hospitality is still a part of their life. They like visitors and their doors are always open. Any visitor to the household is immediately seated and served, at the very least, coffee or Kalmyk tea and cookies. Frequently, an entire meal is served. If the guest is unexpected, the preparation of the food is begun by the woman of the house as soon as the visitor arrives.

While the food is being prepared, vodka is usually served and toasts are drunk to the health of the guest and the host. The visitor must partake of both drink and food to avoid insulting his host.

The very strict formal canons of etiquette of the past do not in general prevail today, probably because of the absence of the class structure. However, the people are knowledgeable about and interested in the proper forms of behavior and respect. The author witnessed several informal discussions concerning etiquette where the topics covered included the proper behavior when entering a home and the proper forms of address and behavior to the nobility — what should be said and what were the proper body movements involved. Interestingly, the participants were sometimes young adults in their twenties and were children of Buzāva emigrés. The perpetuation of these forms of behavior may be gleaned from one informant who noted that after the Revolution, Communist doctrine dictated that all were equal. Nevertheless, the director of the Kolkhoz (the collective) was paid the same formal respect which in pre-revolutionary times had characterized the behavior of the commoners toward the nobility. This constituted, in effect, a perpetuation of a particular mode of behavior toward those in a position of authority, though the criteria for designating this position of authority had changed.

The tradition of gift exchange on the occasion of a visit (outside of a particular ceremonial context) has also been maintained to some extent. In the past, because of the distances between camps, visits were made infrequently and gifts were brought on each occasion. Today the bringing of a gift — most frequently a bottle of vodka and a box of cookies — usually accompanies only those visits made after a long lapse of time and constitutes an added demonstration of respect in order to obviate any slight felt by the host because of the lapse of contact. The people like many visits and are offended if not visited. On such occasions, a small gift — a scarf or handkerchief — is tendered by the host. As has always been the tradition, effusive thanks are not tendered on either side. And as we shall see more clearly in the chapters on Tsagan Sar and the institution of marriage, such visiting and gift exchange on stipulated ceremonial occasions constitutes the erjalg'x — wishing well, the paying of respect (kundelegn) — and serves to bind, reinforce and reiterate social relationships. Even the custom of sending coins to friends through a third party as a remembrance of past contact is still occasionally practiced by the elderly.

## Leisure Activities

The traditional Kalmyk sports of wrestling and horse racing are no longer practiced, though the remembrance of them live on in old and young alike. The favorite Kalmyk sport, if such can be said to exist, is soccer. This game was very popular after the war when the Kalmyks were in displaced persons camps. The young men formed a team, engaging in competition with teams representing the other ethnic groups in the area. The team, the Djangars (the Kalmyk epical hero) became a rallying point for the Kalmyk younger generation. It was supported by young and old alike and served to further the unity and ethnic identity of the group.

Card-playing is still a popular male pasttime. In Freewood Acres during the winter months particularly, when many men are not working, card games may last all night and well into the next day, and stakes sometimes run high. Card-playing and visiting constitute the usual diversions for these men at this time of year.

Traditional Kalmyk singing and dancing are a frequent accompaniment to formal and informal gatherings, particularly those which coincide with the various festive ceremonies in the religious cycle. Following the meal and after several rounds of drinks, some individual may feel encouraged to rise and begin the dancing. It is done solo with characteristic arm and leg movements. Usually one or two individuals dance at one time, tapping the shoulder of the one whom they select to be the next dancer. Others, who feel impelled by the accompanying music, may also rise and dance from time to time.

The only traditional instrument still remembered is the dombr. Dancing and singing now is usually to the tempo of a bailalika or a mandolin. Some people recently have received from relatives in the U.S.S.R. Kalmyk records with solo vocal selections. These are in great demand by all generations and are passed around and taped and played many times. A number of adolescent boys and girls have learned these songs and dances and participate in the entertainment at the annual Tsagan Sar ball. Occasionally, a number of elderly women and sometimes men will gather after they have celebrated Matsag (a religious fast and prayer day), eating, drinking and singing what sound like laments. Several songs and dances learned by the old emigrés during their sojourn in Eastern Europe, such as the Yugoslavian Kolo, have been added to this body of cultural traits to be performed and enjoyed by all. At balls and dances the usual Western ball-room dances are also part of the repertoire,



and adolescents and young adults enjoy doing whatever dance may be the latest craze. This cultural heritage of music, song and dance, though not extensive, is maintained by the group as a whole regardless of age or generation, whether they were born in Russia or in Eastern Europe or whether they are Astrakhan or Buzāva.

The degree of Kalmyk participation in the recreational activities of the host culture varies. Almost all houses have television and even those who know no English may enjoy an occasional action program, but it is primarily the province of the young. The effect of television is difficult to measure. For example, though many of the Kalmyks' new material possessions duplicate what they have seen on television, it is only one of several avenues of exposure to such items. By and large, television will have its effects primarily upon the young, and, placing it in proper perspective, we must regard it as only one among several channels of change whose permanent effects are yet to be assessed.

This would similarly hold true for other media of communication, including movies, magazines, and newspapers. The newspaper found most consistently in Kalmyk homes is the Russian language daily, Noevoe Russkoye Slovo, which in a sense is used as an official channel of communication since it contains notices of deaths and special Kalmyk events to which people at large are invited. Since all mature Kalmyks know Russian, it is also the means by which they normally keep abreast of world events.

### Literature and Language

By and large, the rich body of Kalmyk oral tradition is familiar only to members of the senior generation of Kalmyks in the United States. Though stories and proverbs are related to the younger generations, they are not really being 'handed down'. Moreover, the several attempts by various individuals to record these tales on tape have not yet come to fruition. The only traditional Kalmyk literary work familiar to most is the epic of Djangar — and in some cases only his name is known. Among the small group of Kalmyk intellectuals active in the Society for the Preservation of Kalmyk Culture knowledge of the Kalmyk literary heritage is more extensive. Some of the members as well as several of the older men (mainly priests) are versed in the Zaya Pandita script which is all but unknown among the younger generations. Furthermore, these individuals also endeavor to stay abreast of the latest Kalmyk literature emanating from the Soviet Union, including novels, poetry and historical works. The Kalmyk Mongol language continues to be used by Kalmyk Mongols in the Soviet Union and is taught in the primary schools

of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Newspapers as well as popular literature is being published in the language, attesting to its continued importance.

This intellectual interest in Kalmyk culture, particularly in the language and literary heritage, also had a fluorescence at the turn of the century, when some of the Kalmyks who had obtained higher education at Russian universities endeavored to promote formal training in the Kalmyk language and script in Russian state elementary schools, and to collect and record as much as they could of the Kalmyk oral tradition (Adelman 1960:49-54). At the same time, Mongolists such as Pozdneev, Ramstedt and Kotwicz were also collecting such materials and publishing them. These men also did linguistic and philological analyses of their materials, subsequently publishing dictionaries and grammars. These scholarly investigations have continued somewhat sporadically to the present time in the Soviet Union and elsewhere (see Poppe 1950 for a more detailed list of these works.)

Linguists recognize three Kalmyk dialects — Torgūt, Dörbet and Buzāva. However, dialect mixture began to occur after the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in the thirties when Kalmyks from various areas were brought together. There has been one linguistic investigation of the language of the Kalmyks in the United States. This unpublished study was made by John Street who used Buzāva informants. Though our own field investigation did not focus on language except as a means of communication, the author observed that there is still a definite dialect distinction between the speech of the Buzāva and that of the Dörbet and Torgūt in mature generations. Furthermore, the speech of the Buzāva shows more Russian influence — frequently utilizing Russian suffix forms and loan words. But even the majority of the Astrakhan (Dörbet-Torgūt) have incorporated some Russian terms as, for example, the days of the week; very few individuals still use the Kalmyk terms. All the members of the adult generations know Russian and it constitutes an important second language even for those born in Eastern Europe. English is the important second language for the younger generations, and it is also important for the many adults who utilize it in the course of their employment and in their contacts with outsiders. Most of the old emigrés also know either Bulgarian or Serbian. Many people know a little German and some know French. It is not unusual to find individuals who are fluent in three or four languages and who additionally have some knowledge of one or two others. The Kalmyks' traditional ability to become proficient in several languages is still very much in evidence (See Chapter II).

## Religious Aspects

In our description of present-day Kalmyk religious practices, as in our consideration of traditional religious practices in Chapter III, we will not treat in detail the various aspects of the present monastic hierarchy nor the metaphysical, cosmological or philosophical aspects of the religion. Rather, we will operate from the point of view of the Kalmyk layman in America today, and we shall limit our discussion primarily to those aspects of the religion which directly involve and concern him. The internal features and operations of the monastic establishments as they traditionally operated and as they have been reconstituted here are discussed at great length by Adelman (1960), and we shall, therefore, merely allude to whatever aspects are pertinent to our own focus.<sup>5</sup>

Shortly after their arrival in the United States, the Kalmyks began the reconstitution of their religious system. Only twenty priests, a few less than the total number who had emigrated from Russia during the first and second waves of emigration, came to settle in America. Several have since died. All are over sixty years of age and represent primarily the higher ranks in the traditional ecclesiastical hierarchy. Until his death, the highest ranking cleric was not a Kalmyk but rather a Khalkha Mongol, the Living Buddha, Dilowa Gegen Khutuktu, who formerly headed a monastery in Outer Mongolia — coming to the United States in 1949 as a political refugee. He was deferred to in all religious matters and was the final authority in religious decisions. Though he lived in Baltimore, he participated frequently in rituals and ceremonies in Freewood Acres and in Philadelphia and had a residence in one of the religious establishments in Freewood Acres and also in New York. During the first years of settlement, several young men were mandžis or novices in training for priesthood. Their number has dwindled to two. Recently, however, several priests have been sent from India by the Dalai Lama to augment the dwindling number of priests. (Two are Khalkha, one is a Kalmyk from Djungaria and only one is an Astrakhan Kalmyk.)

Despite their sparse number, a complex of factors involving schisms among the priests over leadership as well as traditional and more recent schisms among the laity have resulted in the creation of four separate religious establishments. In the beginning, the traditional schism between the Astrakhan and Buzāva resulted in the establishment of two separate religious units, the Astrakhan in Freewood Acres and the Buzāva in Philadelphia. Soon

after, factional strife amongst the Buzāva led to the establishment of a second Buzāva unit in New Jersey close to the Astrakhan.<sup>6</sup> The fourth unit, oriented towards academic Buddhism, was established by a lama interested in the furtherance of these aspects and the modernization of Buddhism.

Each of these religious establishments is supported by a society of lay adherents except, for the last, which is supported by interested individuals. The societies' officers are responsible for the physical maintenance of the religious establishments. Each wage-earning member is required to pay monthly dues, but often this must be collected by the lay officials. As was traditional, additional monetary contributions are made by the laity on every temple visit. These contributions may range from small change to ten or twenty dollars on major ceremonial occasions. In the same spirit in which they traditionally sponsored and built shrines as good works, so today many of the temple furnishings have been donated by the laity to increase their own merit and blessedness. The members may also contribute their labor as was done in the case of Don Society B when a new temple was recently built. Those who could not aid in the work contributed food to feed the workers.

The physical plants of these religious establishments are essentially similar and include a place of worship which is furnished with a multitude of thankas or Tibetan religious pictures, flowers, satin banners, prayer flags and several small tables flanked opposite the door which serve as the altar and on and around which are placed incense and offerings of various types. Along the left side, facing the altar, are the low seats or divans and tables of the clergy, arranged in the order of their hierarchical standing — the highest being closest to the altar. (Comparison with the Pallas description and pictures show the essential continuity (see Plates 3 and 6). The religious precinct also includes a place of residence for its priests. In effect, the unit is a reconstitution of the traditional monastic establishment. The whole is referred to by the Kalmyks in English as the temple and in Kalmyk as Xurul (assembly of monks) or olna gazar (holy ground).

The Astrakhan Society set up its temple in a building which formerly functioned as a garage. The simple shingled exterior remained unchanged. The door was reversed to face a small inner courtyard where a small building was constructed. This building houses a large prayer wheel recently imported from Japan, and a source of great pride (see Plate 9). The two houses contiguous to the temple house the priests who constitute the resident clergy.

Don Society B has built a new temple of simple design with a white stucco exterior on the property it owns. The two resident priests live in an older house close by that was on the property when purchased. The temple of Don Society A is located in one of the 'row houses' in the principal area of Kalmyk concentration in Philadelphia. The first floor contains a long room which constitutes the temple itself and on the second floor is the resident priest's living quarters.

Although ideally these religious establishments are supposed to be 'not less than the distance a human voice can reach from the settlement of the laity' (Adelman 1960:207 from Pozdneev), some historical sources indicate that in the past they were close enough to permit attendance at rituals when desired. Sometimes several priests might reside within an *aimak* or nomadic unit consisting of several nomadic camps, in order to perform necessary functions. The Buzāva are said to have built their monasteries quite close to lay settlements and during the first emigration the temple became a focal point of activity, people living near enough to be able to attend services and ceremonials. In the United States, the temples are located in the principal areas of Kalmyk population, enabling the laity to attend rituals and ceremonies or to consult a priest when they desire. Though each religious establishment and its supporting society is autonomous, there is interaction among the priests of the various units and collaboration on certain of the holidays such as *Ürüs* which honors Maitreya, and in the performance of *Gal Tjalg'n*, the fire sacrifice, when the householder who has the rite performed in his house invites priests from all of the temples. There is also interaction among the laity when members of societies attend services in other temples. This lay interaction in religious ceremonies takes place primarily between the two Don societies.

Prayer formulae, prayer beads (*erkn*) and the prayer wheel are still important constituents of worship. Even amulets are still possessed by some. The author was once shown an interesting brooch-like object with a central compartment containing a scrap of paper with a prayer formula written on it. It was an amulet said by its owner to protect individuals on trips and when embarking on new endeavors. Its efficacy was undoubted, and its owner stated that he always carried it on trips with him.

In accordance with our analysis of traditional religious ceremonialism, interaction of the laymen and of religious personnel today may be seen as occurring within three general categories of action. The first is that of the various annual group and subgroup

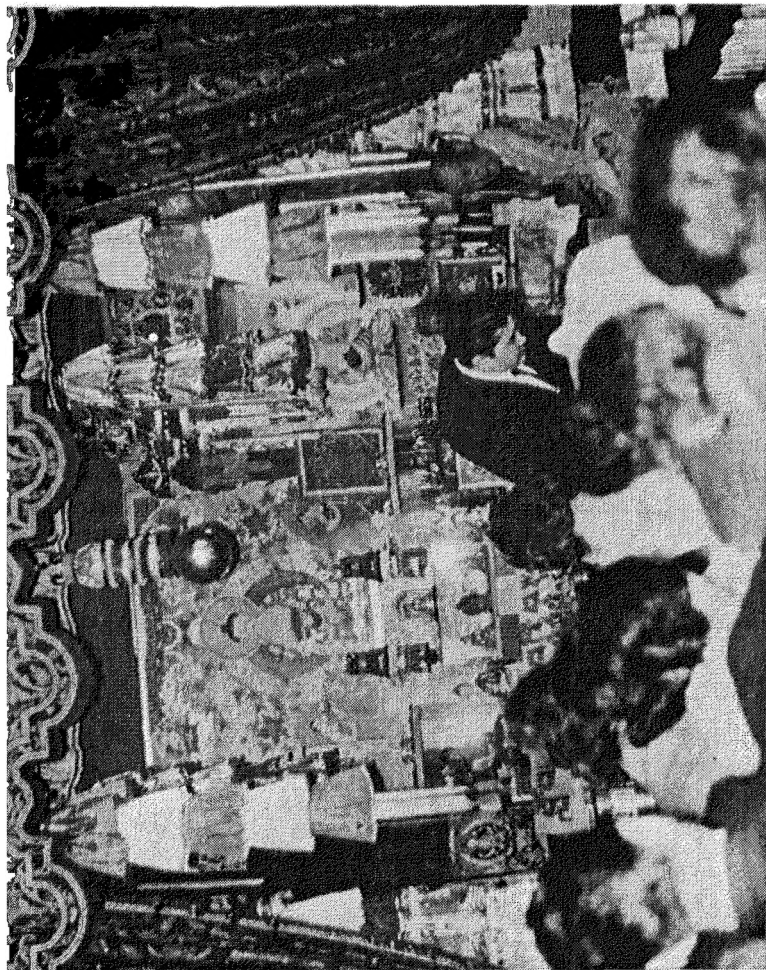


Plate 6  
Interior of Temple, 1964.

rituals and ceremonials. The second is the involvement of religious personnel at the recognized rites de passage. The third is the individual consultation with religious personnel at times of illness for the purposes of healing, curing or restoration of the balance of the life cycle. There is a fourth category of religious action which involves only the laity, since it is concerned primarily with household religious activities.<sup>7</sup>

The first and most important of the annual group ceremonies is that which initiates the holiday month of Tsagan Sar or the Buddhist White Month. In view of its position as a focal institution, we will examine every aspect of this most crucial ceremony and its function as a renewal and reinforcement of Kalmyk life in a separate chapter. Accordingly, we will not dwell upon it in detail at this point.

The next group-wide ceremony in the annual cycle is the combined celebration of Ürüs-ova, which is now celebrated for convenience on the first weekend after the commencement of the first month of summer to permit greater lay participation. This ceremony combines the two traditional ceremonies — Ürüs, celebrating the conception of Šagdža-muni or the Buddha, and the yearly celebration which took place at the obo (owa) or shrines to placate malicious spirits. Elements of the 'Bilderfest' — the ceremony reported by Bergmann as taking place several days after Ürüs also appear to have been incorporated in this ceremony.

The ceremony does not take place in the temple but at an altar set up outside (in the case of the Don Temple in Philadelphia the celebration takes place on land owned by its society, located some twenty miles outside of Philadelphia, near Medford, New Jersey). Only the two Don temples observe this celebration. Though the Astrakhan group does not as a whole observe it, several of its priests and some of the lay members do participate in one or both of the Don rituals.

The ritual itself is basically the same at both temples. A picture of Maitreya draped in silk hangings is located in back of the table which acts as an altar. The table is surrounded by offerings of food, borts'k, Kalmyk tea, cookies, butter, candy and fruit which have been brought by the laity. The priests sit around a table located close by, clad in their traditional crimson or yellow brocade robes, holding Tibetan prayer bells and small cymbals and reciting the prayers in Tibetan and Classical Kalmyk. Toward the end of the chanting, three laymen, usually the senior members of the group, make a libation of milk, one holding the bowl as another flicks the milk with a green-leaved branch (See Plate 7). Dur:

prayer recital by the priests, participation by the laity, who are seated in a circle around the priests and altar, is limited primarily to the movement of their prayer beads and small prayer wheels and the chanting of the usual prayer prescription, Om-mani-pad-me-hum.

There is some variation in the feasting after the ceremony. At Don Temple B located in Freewood Acres, tables are set up and the traditional foods, maken and borts'k, and drink, Kalmyk tea and vodka, are served to the group, having been prepared by the women in the kitchen of the priests' residence. Fruit and cookies, sometimes from the offerings, are also served. The celebration was traditionally accompanied by games of prowess, wrestling and foot races, but now only the children participate in such games. Don Temple A in Philadelphia holds its Ürüs -Ova celebration away from its temple. A portable altar is set up in a field on the Society's land and after the ritual, people set up tables in back of their cars which have been parked nearby and unpack elaborate picnic spreads. They visit back and forth, paying their respects and drinking with relatives and friends.

It is interesting to note that these communal feasts of the Buzāva are the final phase of all group rituals and celebrations, including the three major holidays of the year celebrated by the Don Temples. Thus continuity is maintained with the past, when some type of feast always accompanied religious ceremonies. In contrast, celebrations at the Astrakhan temple do not include this final phase except in the form described below for Tsagan Sar. The communal feasts at the Don temple often serve the dual purpose of providing time for discussion of business of the society which supports the temple as well as time for social interaction among the members of the group. Both Don religious establishments have specifically allocated areas for these purposes, while the Astrakhan religious establishment does not have an area set aside for such purposes. The only place for the laity to congregate is in the temple itself which is used only for strictly ritual purposes.

The third major ceremony celebrated in much the same manner as it was traditionally celebrated is the ritual of Zul (Zulā) (lamp) which takes place in the middle of winter on the 25th day of the month of Ükr (cow). People still recall that it marks the passing on to the next world of Tsong-Kha-Pa, the great religious reformer, and they still reckon their 'Kalmyk age' from this day on which all become one year older. Kalmyk children, when asked their age, most frequently give their Kalmyk age.



During the day, the woman of the house prepares borts'k, xolodéc and fresh Kalmyk tea. Then she makes some dough from water and flour and forms a boat-shaped square or round form — the lamp traditional for this celebration — into which she sticks toothpicks, whose ends have been wrapped in cotton — one toothpick for each member of the family.

In the early evening, the whole family goes to the temple, taking along the dough lamp.<sup>8</sup> In the open courtyard opposite the door of the temple, a large table has been set up upon which have been placed many small metal holders containing wicks and oil. Next to these are a number of the boat-shaped forms which had been prepared by the women. In addition, there are several cans with long tapers. On arrival, each member of the family, even young children, takes a taper, lights it and then begins to light the wicks. Each wick that is lit is supposed to excuse a sin knowingly or unknowingly committed during the preceding year. All the individuals present, including the priests who accompany their rounds with prayers, and the laity continue to walk around the table, lighting the wicks which continue to be blown out by the wind and the cold of the night. Despite the intense cold, young and old continue to go around the table for fifteen or twenty minutes. Several religious musical instruments, drum, bells, cymbals and shell horns are brought out by the priests who recite prayers and chants to the accompaniment of the music. All those present then walk to the right, three times around the temple — one time for each of Buddha's principal doctrines — and then go inside. (Note the similarity between this description and that of Pallas [see Plate 4]).

On entering the Astrakhan Temple, one first genuflects to the altar and to the highest priest present and then to several other shrines located in the temple.<sup>9</sup> An offering in the form of money is usually placed on the table before the priest and at the various shrines. In contrast, at Don Temple B, on entering one makes a genuflection toward the altar and then sits down. After the ceremony is over, the laity line up to make genuflections and monetary offerings to the priests and the religious relects, and then they leave.

After one genuflects, he back away from the altar — for one is not supposed to turn one's back to the altar — and sits down on the low benches opposite the altar which have been provided for the laity. The priests continue to intone prayers in Tibetan from the prayer sheets on the tables before them. These tables are also covered with other prayer sheet bundles and small prayer bells and the other traditional religious paraphernalia — vessels of holy

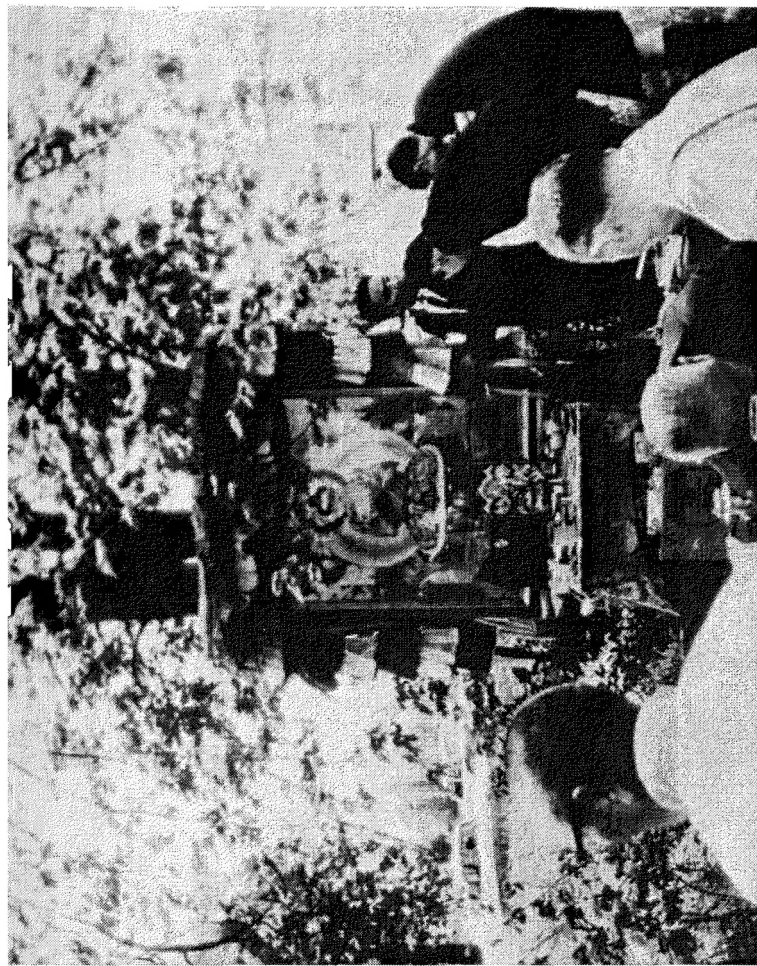


Plate 7  
Ūrūs celebration, 1961.

oil, dishes of seed and so forth. The praying continues for about twenty minutes. Lay participation is limited again to moving prayer beads, intoning the Omni or holding on to the long string attached to the large prayer wheel on the side. The laity in general are not acquainted with the contents of these prayers and seem only to partake of the emotional feeling of the priests' religious activity. Finally, the priests tie up their prayer sheet bundles which signals the end of the service. Individuals again genuflect to the highest priest present and back out of the room. The woman of the house takes the 'doughboat' or square with its burned out wicks back to her house and leaves it in the kitchen where it remains for a few days. The family returns home and sits down to the supper meal consisting of the traditional dishes prepared by the wife during the day. According to one Astrakhan informant, people may visit one another and bring small gifts on this holiday, but the author did not witness this type of activity at the celebration of Zul which she attended.

There is a fourth annual ritual which was also traditionally celebrated. It takes place in the home to 'insure the continuity of the household fire during the winter and to pacify the malicious spirits'. It is the ritual of Gal Tjalg'n or the Fire Sacrifice. Not all householders perform this ceremony for it involves a considerable monetary outlay. Don Society B holds a communal Gal Tjalg'n ceremony at its temple for the congregation as a whole; this has as its precedent the ulus-wide ceremony which was held to promote the welfare of the group as a whole.

The householder who wishes the ceremony performed makes arrangements for the priests from the various religious establishments to be in attendance. A room in the house is set aside in which the priests are to sit. The furniture is removed and a table set up around which the priests sit. On the table are placed several items of religious sacralia which are brought from the temple such as the decorative ewer with the peacock feather stopper which contains sacred oil and a large flat decorated form and dish into which mustard seeds — the symbol of longevity — are poured. A dish of rice is also placed on the table. A stick with red, green and white strips of silk attached is set against the frame of one of the windows. On the bureau, the only item of furniture that is not removed from this room is the household shrine of the family with a fresh offering of fruit, candy, nuts and two lamb bones before it. The man of the household is seated in the doorway. In the adjacent room around several large tables sit the close, distant and non-traceable 'relations' of this family who had been invited to attend.

The chanting of prayers by the priests begins at about 11 A.M. By this time only the older invited guests have usually arrived. Others arrive later with offerings of vodka and cookies for the household which they hand to the women of the house. They then go to the doorway of the room where the priests are chanting, make an obeisance in the form of the genuflection and retire to seats around the table with the other guests. Prayers and chants continue, periodically punctuated by priestly requests for various items such as clarified butter, which are needed in the course of the prayer recital. Those entering the room always back out of it, the same procedure as is followed in the temple.

In the kitchen on the stove are three dough candles with cotton wicks and clarified butter and three mounds of dirt into which are set twigs with red ribbons tied to the ends — this being equated to the traditional hearth. On one of the burners of the stove is a pot containing water and butter — substitutes for the traditional melted sheep's fat and holy water. According to the members of the household, these items symbolize the 'good things of the earth' and they are placed on the 'household fire' to induce these good things 'to come into the house'.

At one point in the prayer chant, the lowest ranking priest present takes the ewer of sacred oil and enters the room where the lay guests are seated. He approaches each person, pouring a bit of the sacred oil into each outstretched palm. Each person then puts the oil to his mouth and then to his forehead.

The lay guests then take plates containing candy, fruit, nuts and cookies which had been placed on the tables and hold the plates out in front of them. Since there are not enough plates for all present, most of the women merely place their hands in front of them as if they are holding plates. At a later point in the priestly chant, maintaining continuity with the past, the cry curri is raised first by the priests and followed by all present and then all extend their plates or their hands and bring them in toward their bodies. This is said to signify the inducement of good things into the house. Then, after a further brief period of prayer, an older layman who is knowledgeable in religious procedure stands at the stove, the 'household fire', and raises the same cry three times; again, the response from the lay guests is the same. After another fifteen minutes of prayer recital, the ceremony ends, about one and one-half hours after it began.

At the completion of the ceremony, the man of the house makes obeisance to the priests at the doorway of their room, giving them

each a monetary offering. Then his children, his wife, and other close relatives respectively make obeisance to the priests and place monetary offerings on the table, followed by the rest of the lay guests, first men and then women.

After the lay guests and priests are again seated, maken is served by the women of the household in the traditionally appropriate order, first to the priests and then to the man who is considered the most senior member of the larger kin group, or yasn of which this household is a part. Thereafter, the other older men and, lastly, the women are served. After the meal, the priests are presented with white scarfs by the man of the house and they proceed to leave. Then the man of the house serves vodka and toasts are drunk by all present. Soon, smaller groups (in terms of age) are formed and further drinking and toasting continues for some hours.

In addition to these major ceremonies annually celebrated, a series of four 'dedicated days' or Dūtsn which commemorate important events in the career of the historic Buddha (Śākyamūni) are still solemnized as in the past. These may be observed either privately or by small groups of individuals. The day is observed by maintaining a vegetable diet and reciting prayers.

Another series of rites in the annual ceremonial cycle is that of the fast days or Matsaq. This series of observances is characterized as in the past by the maintenance of a restricted, non-meat diet and the recitation of prayers. These fast days occur on the 8th, 15th and 30th of each month. In the observance of both Matsaq and Dūtsn, participation seems primarily limited to older people. Some of these 'fast days' may be observed by groups of the laity without the services of a priest as was the case in the past. The following is a description of a fast day ritual taking place during the month of Tsagan Sar as observed by a group of elderly persons affiliated with Don Society B.

No priests are present, though the ceremony takes place at the priests' residence which is contiguous to Don Society B's temple. This house is also used as a meeting place and the members of this prayer group are members of this society. The participants arrive at the house early in the morning. They sit or kneel in a circle on blankets and coats arranged on the floor of the large meeting room. The prayer recitation is in Kalmyk and is led by a lay prayer leader. Near the latter's place is a mantel with a picture of Buddha on it. Each participant has one or more sets of prayer beads wrapped in handkerchiefs and some have prayer wheels located on the

floor or on low tables in front of them. These are also rotated by the participants. At intervals during the prayer, individuals join in with the prayer leader, while at other times only his voice is heard. During the whole period of prayer, the beads are rotated and the prayer wheel turned. Praying is stopped periodically for a period of rest, sometimes lasting an hour or more. At dusk, tea is sometimes prepared by one of the women. In the evening, some sleep in the house while others go home. The prayer begins again at 5:30 the following morning and ends at sunrise when all participants partake of a dish of noodles, rice and raisins. Sometimes those who return home complete their praying in their own homes the next morning. Today, the younger people participate in these holy days only to the extent of going to the temple for a brief period during the day or in the early evening.

The level of lay participation in these rites is highest for the three major ceremonies, particularly Tsagan Sar and Ürüs-Ova. Participation in the other two sets of rites is limited primarily to the clergy and groups of older people who may participate in some of the fast days associated with Tsagan Sar or other holidays. Younger people may sometimes visit the temple for a brief time during these fast and dedication days. Participation in all these rites varies with the individual and depends solely on individual choice.

There are two other types of annual rites which are celebrated by specific subgroups. These are ceremonies to insure the corporate spiritual welfare of the aimak and memorial services to honor the great departed lamas of particular monasteries. A majority of Don Temple B's members are from one aimak, Borla Aimak. This group holds an annual religious service in the summer-time at the temple to promote the welfare of the aimak. Such group-wide ceremonies probably have their origins in annual ulus and subgroup ceremonies held to promote the welfare of the group and its herds. This same temple also contains the relics of two famous lamas for which services are held each spring. Priests from the other temples also participate in these services.

The clergy participate to a varying degree in a second category of religious action, that of the rites de passage which are ritualized by the Kalmyks: a ceremony for the newborn, marriage and mortuary rites. A life prolongation rite held at the end of each twelve-year cycle may perhaps also be considered in this category. Only marriage and funeral rites normally involve group participation at the temple. As in the past, when a child is born the priest is requested to pick a propitious name. Several days thereafter, the family

brings the priest to their house where he offers a prayer and ceremonially washes the baby, consecrating it. Usually only a small group of the immediate family are present but one can invite many people if he desires. This rite may also be performed in the temple but this seems to be rare. Relatives visit afterwards to wish the family well and usually some kind of gift is brought for the baby and also some vodka; a feast follows. This sequence of events at birth demonstrates a continuity from the past.

Life prolongation, since it is not a regular procedure for all but is necessary only in some cases, will be considered later in connection with the curing and healing activities of the clergy.

The rites of marriage continue to be an important focal point in the life of Kalmyks in America today. At present the actual religious aspect of the rite involves a brief blessing of the couple with a few witnesses and is far outweighed by the elaborate secular ceremonial aspects of the rite. Because of its focal importance to the individual as well as to the group, our description of marriage practices — both religious and secular — will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

The mortuary rite may be divided into three parts and shows some persistence of past tradition. The first part consists of the burial rites, usually within two to three days after death. From the time of death up to the day of burial, prayers are continuously recited for the deceased as in the past and lay individuals also participate in the vigil, 'sitting up' with the deceased though the body itself rests in a funeral home. On the day of burial, the deceased is brought to the temple and the open coffin is placed just inside the door while short prayers are recited and prayer flags and written religious formulae are put into the coffin. Then it is closed and removed to the Kalmyk cemetery at which time another short prayer is recited and the coffin sprinkled with mustard seeds. Attendance is large the number of cars in the funeral procession sometimes running as high as forty.

The second part of the rite occurs on a day selected as being astrologically proper for the deceased at which time the 'big praying' takes place. Many people attend this ceremony which is the traditional *dülēn* or soul mass. The prayers of the priests are to aid the soul in its passage to the next world. Interesting stories are told about souls that refused to leave and about the various techniques employed by the priests to convince these souls 'to leave our world'.

The final part takes place on the forty-ninth day, when additional prayers are recited. Thereafter, on various ritual occasions, the

family of the deceased may give pieces of paper with his name along with the names of other deceased members of the family to the priests to offer up a prayer for these individuals.

The third category of action consists of seeking the aid of the clergy at times of illness. This is a less important aspect of clerical activity than it was in the past since Kalmyks for the most part readily avail themselves of the services of modern trained medical practitioners. However, the pragmatic attitudes of the Kalmyks toward illness still persists. The services of Western doctors and the services of a priest are frequently utilized in concert. Some priests are felt to have more curative powers than others.

The author witnessed such a situation when a child in a particular household had swollen glands and a sore throat. During the day, he was taken to the local doctor who diagnosed the case and prescribed certain medicines which were immediately purchased and administered. In the evening, the child's mother took him to one of the priests who had a reputation for being very good with children.<sup>10</sup> The mother brought a bottle of tap water from home with her. On arriving, the mother expalined the boy's illness and also indicated that she was nervous and an insomniac. The rite was performed in the priest's bedroom. The priest placed the bottle of water which the mother had given to him close by and took out his prayer beads. He briefly looked at the child's neck. He took out a bundle of prayer sheets wrapped in orange figured silk and touched the child's head and later the mother's head with the bundle several times while murmuring prayers. Periodically, the priest picked up the bottle of water and blew into it. He also blew gently several times on both mother and child. Occasionally, he moved his prayer beads. The whole rite lasted about fifteen minutes and at the end, the priest closed the bottle of water and handed it to the mother. On her return to the house, the mother explained that she would drink the blessed water three times a day, about one-eighth of a cup each time. Sometimes a visit to the priest involves only a recitation of symptoms and his suggestions as to food avoidance and so forth; sometimes, as in this instance, prayers would be said. The efficacy of such holy water is a reiteration of an earlier belief which in the past found its expression in the usn-aršan or water consecration as well as in medical practice. Food avoidance as a curative measure also has its roots in earlier times.

Traditionally, Tibetan medicine was practiced by those priests who had had the training and received the degree of emči. They



utilized herbal medicines among other things to affect cures. One of the resident priests has received such training and is consulted from time to time and does dispense herbal remedies. A woman may also go to a priest to ask for his help or his prayer so that she may bear a son. She may be advised to avoid certain things or situations which are unlucky for her from the astrological point of view.

Priests also may be consulted in situations which are termed disturbances of the life cycle. This is said to be related to the periodic renewal of the life cycle every twelve years at the end of which some individuals sometimes fall sick. In such cases, life prolongation rites are deemed a necessity. One young man related to the author that at the age of about thirteen and again at age twenty-five he fell sick and had trouble with his sight. The priest administered to him and said prayers over the water and he 'was cured'. In another instance, such a disturbance of the life cycle was treated by means of the traditional ceremony which involved the use of čaj. This young man was skeptical of these practices and referred to them as 'witchcraft', but he 'had to admit that they worked'. The efficacy of these measures is supported by many, and even those individuals who feel that they should show 'Western skepticism' state that they sometimes work. As a result, both Western medical practices and these traditional methods are called upon to affect cures.

The fourth category, religious activity within the home, is centered around the household shrine or burxan in each Kalmyk household before which the members of the household are supposed to pray twice each day. (See Plate 8.) The shrine is usually located in a cabinet or on top of a dresser in the bedroom of the oldest man or woman in the household. The shrine varies from house to house in its elaborateness. Some contain many religious images and objects while others may have only a few. The basic elements are one or several religious images, Tibetan thankas, or other pictures of Buddha, and sometimes pictures of the Dalai Lama which stand upright on the dresser or are attached to the wall or the inside of the cabinet if that is where the shrine is located. On the dresser or on the shelf of the cabinet are one or several small oil lamps or zula. Here are also placed offerings of fresh food (dēdži). Prayer beads (erkn) carefully wrapped in folded handkerchiefs may also be placed here. Usually there is only one shrine in each household, but in some instances where the household contains a stem or extended family, there may be two burxan — one for the younger and one for the senior couple — however this is not usually the case,

particularly if there is only one member of the senior generation or if the younger couple is residing patrilocally. The burxan is respected in the same way as the altar in the temple. Though one may perform various types of household activities in the same room, one never turns one's back on the burxan.

Variation exists in the observance of the twice-a-day prayer and some only have time to pray once a day. They kneel before the burxan, moving the prayer beads and saying Omni. Then they light the incense and sometimes the oil lamp, just as in the past the first spark from the hearth was used to light a lamp as a fire offering. Frequently, as was traditional, fresh food is placed before the burxan as an offering or dēdži, as, for example, the first cup poured from freshly made Kalmyk tea, or fresh varen'k or even bliny. It is interesting to note that this is a Russian dish and yet it can be used as an offering, indicating the quick and complete incorporation of a new material item within the context of a persisting pattern of action. These food offerings remain at the shrine several days and then are removed, sometimes to be eaten with other leftover foods.

More formal respects to the burxan are also paid on other occasions such as at certain points in the wedding ritual and during Tsagan Sar. When a new house is built or a family moves to another house, a priest may be called in to bless the burxan — reminiscent of the ritual consecration of the tent and household, Ukal-örgena. These household shrine activities involve women more frequently than men, though on important occasions all participate. In addition to activities involving the shrine, one sometimes sees old women sitting in the kitchen or living room counting or moving their prayer beads. They may even be in conversation while they continue to move their beads. They believe that the activity increases their blessedness.

As in earlier times, lay participation in religious rites is not obligatory in order to insure well-being and blessedness, for 'it is the priests through their piety and daily prayers for the salvation of all sentient beings who provide merit for individual and community salvation' (Adelman 1960:216). However, interaction within a religious context or in the secular aspects of religious rites remains an important phase of Kalmyk life today (see Plate 9).

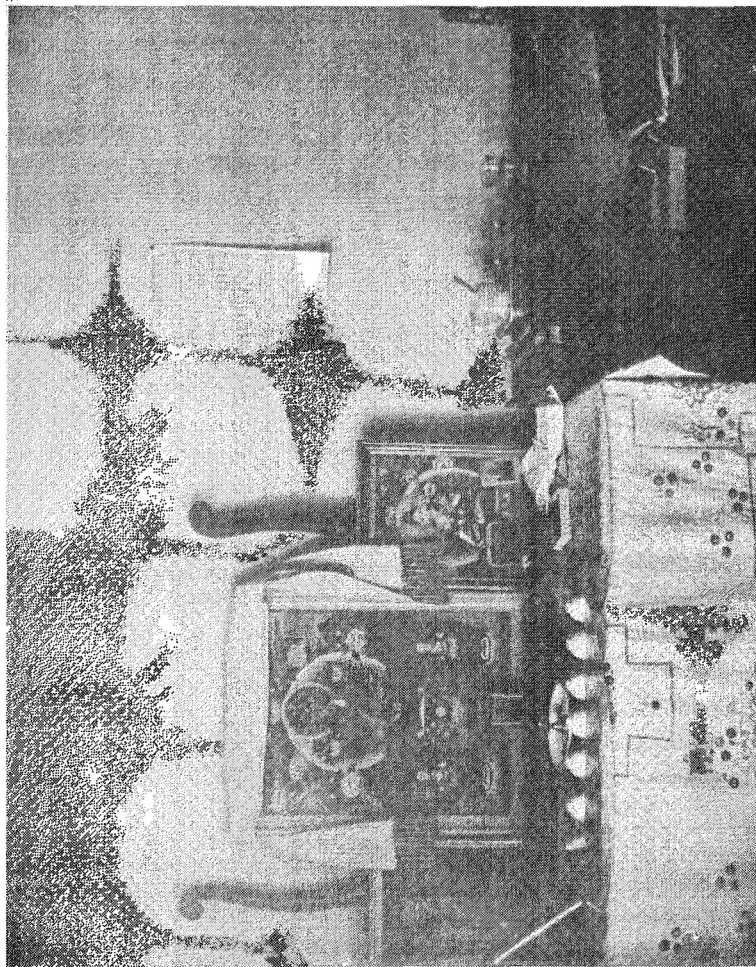
Comparison of past and present religious rituals and practices shows that while there has been attenuation and simplification in recent times in this sphere of life, there has been no incorporation of foreign traits.<sup>11</sup>

Changes and accommodations have included the telescoping of elements from several rituals into a single ritual; the elimination of rites directly related to the traditional pastoral economy such as the annual consecration of animals; the elimination of rites such as the water consecration ceremony which are either no longer feasible or inapplicable to their present life, and the omission of animal sacrifice or other aspects of various rites which are not practicable today. However basic patterns, attitudes and relations in the religious sphere have to a large degree been maintained from the past, despite many vicissitudes.

At the present time it is recognized that the Kalmyk religious tradition is nearing a crucial stage in its existence. It is dependent to a large extent on a priestly hierarchy whose members are dying out. They are not being replaced from within the group — a novitiate has not been developed. Many see importation of priests from India as a solution to the problem; several priests have arrived within recent years to replace those priests who have died. However, the present political situation in Tibet and the limited number of priests who were able to leave with the Dalai Lama to go to India limits the effectiveness of this solution. This crucial problem is seen as a future crisis but little concerted effort has been made to find a solution. However, one attempt at modernization and revitalization has been made by the lama interested in academic Buddhism who has set up his own religious establishment.<sup>12</sup> But his support is primarily from a few intellectuals, and though many others give him respect and some financial support, it is given in reverence for his position as a priest rather than in support of his efforts.

Another solution suggested by one informant is the cessation of celibacy for the clergy, though this is one of the basic features of the monastic system which is a cornerstone of the religious complex.

Continuation of the religion without priests is seen as a possible alternative. The Kalmyks are said to have maintained some aspects of their religion without priests during the Soviet period. They relied on the leadership of older laymen who were able to conduct prayers based on their recollections. The lay prayer meetings which functioned earlier among the Don Kalmyks and continue to function today in the celebration of the rites of matsaq and düts'n may prove to be the nucleus of a future religious leadership when the priestly hierarchy dies out. The possibility of conversion to other religions is not now seen as an alternative. The persistence of their religion in the U.S.S.R. in the 1930's despite the strong opposition of the



**Plate 8**  
**Household burxan.**

Russians is cited by informants to negate this possibility. They feel their adherence to their religion is too strong to permit this, though as we know some instances of conversion have been recorded in the past.

A move towards modernization along the lines of the Japanese Buddhist community church on the West Coast is seen as another alternative. Modernization is seen by some not only as an alternative to extinction when the priestly hierarchy ceases to exist but also as something to be desired in order to bring the people intellectually closer to the concepts of their religion, resulting in support by some intellectuals of the religious revitalization movement (Adelman 1960:223).

To the bulk of the laity, it is the emotional experience which the religion provides for them that is important. It is their physical presence in the temple with its exotic atmosphere, their recitation of the traditional religious prescription, the Omni, the movement of the prayer beads and their partaking of the religious feeling that is of significance to them. Generally, lay knowledge concerning the basic philosophical tenets, the metaphysical and cosmological aspects, the various deities, the content of prayers is limited. Elderly people are said to have somewhat more knowledge of these matters than their juniors, though some of the most basic tenets are conveyed to the younger generation. However, we must keep in mind the fact that much knowledge in the religious sphere was always primarily esoteric and the province of the clerical estate. Lay religious knowledge, traditionally as now, included only an acquaintance with the ceremonial cycle and the lay activity involved therein.

Nevertheless, religious ritual still continues to provide many of the contexts for the social interaction which renews and reinforces the social ties which bind the Kalmyk social entity. In fact, some Kalmyks view the keeping of Kalmyk culture as synonymous with the maintenance of religious tradition. They assert that one of the reasons the Kalmyks have been able to maintain themselves as a group is because of the maintenance of their 'religious tradition'.

### Political Sphere<sup>13</sup>

As a social unit within a national state, the Kalmyks as a group are subject to and involved in the various aspects of that state's political and administrative machinery. They pay taxes, they must conform to the local housing, building and zoning regulations

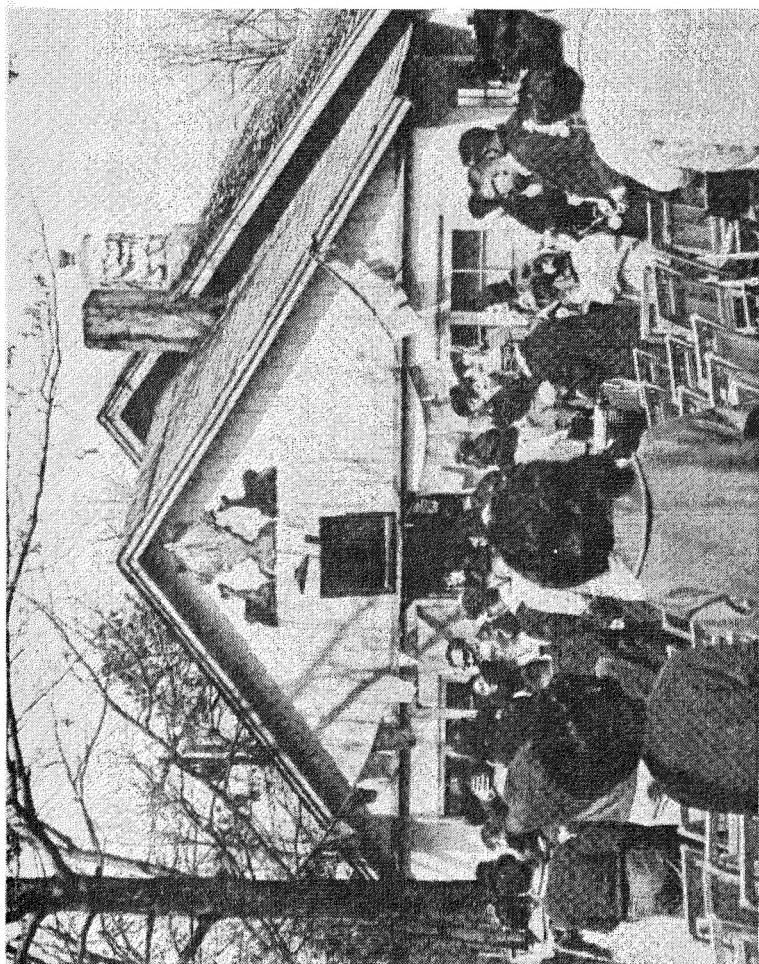


Plate 9

Attendance at the memorial service  
for the late Dilowa Gegen Khutuktu, 1965.

when building their homes and they send their children to the local public schools. A number of young men (approximately thirty to date) have been in military service and others are called up each year. There have been no manifestations of pacifism despite their Buddhist beliefs (but this is not unique in the Buddhist world). They are law-abiding, and except for minor infractions which are characteristic of the bulk of the population — traffic tickets, etc. — there have been no serious entanglements with the law so far.

Though some have become citizens, they do not actively participate in politics, though many evidence interest in national and international political affairs. From time to time the Kalmyks have been involved in international politics. There is a small anti-communist group with five or six active members who often work in conjunction with Russian refugee organizations. Their leader is able to mobilize more participants in activities directly concerning the Kalmyks, as for example, the protest at the United Nations after the invasion of Tibet by the Chinese Communists. People are said to be of two minds regarding this activism: the non-activists who feel this activism jeopardizes the position of the Kalmyks who are still in the U.S.S.R., and the activists who work regardless of this.

Within the Kalmyk social unit, what can be defined as political activity does take place on the level of the societies which support the various religious establishments (see page 111).<sup>14</sup> Every Kalmyk belongs to one of the three existing societies. The societies are in a sense corporate entities. They collectively maintain a certain body of material objects and financial resources. In addition to maintaining and supporting the religious establishment, the societies also have as one of their functions the support of the old, infirmed and needy Kalmyks. However, in most instances this function is fulfilled by relatives rather than by the societies. Administrative power and control are vested in elected officials whose tenure of office is of short duration. Factions or subgroups within the societies vie for control of the elective offices — this is political activity in M. G. Smith's terms and therefore these societies do constitute units which have some governmental functions. It is interesting to note that the existence of three separate societies rather than one overall group is the result of the factionalism, rivalry and differing opinions between various leaders and their supporters at the time of settlement.

Political activities primarily involve those few in positions of leadership or striving for leadership. Since officials are elected to office, those who dominate the field of governmental action must

periodically seek support from the membership. This support is said to be sought on the basis of such factors as kin affiliation, affinal affiliation or aimak affiliation or 'relationship' of any kind. However, 'relationship' and friendship very often override the boundaries of the societies; therefore, factionalism as a behavioral determinant appears to be primarily influential only in the behavior of those who constitute the elite and those who seek the power positions within this system. Despite the corporate nature, by definition, of the societies, no true economic benefits accrue to those in positions of leadership — only prestige and influence within and sometimes outside of the groups. There is no correlation between material wealth and positions of leadership.

Factionalism and rivalry pervade the external as well as internal power relationships of the societies. This competition for power very often comes to the fore when situations arise which necessitate action by all of the Kalmyks as a single unit. A good example of this occurred in 1961 when plans were made to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the arrival of the Kalmyks in the United States. Attempts at collective action were made by all the societies to plan some sort of celebration which involved a trip to Washington and a ball at one of the hotels in Philadelphia. From the beginning, rivalry for representation on the planning committee by the leadership of the three societies caused all plans to become bogged down. Even after agreement was reached on the composition of the committee, a result of a temporary alliance of the leaders of two of the societies against the third — which in turn, was made as a concession in exchange for selection the position of toastmaster at the ball — other problems finally resulted in the cancellation of plans for the ball and only the members of two of the societies made the trip to Washington.

Action of an administrative nature on a level above these societies has occurred but it is either weak or transitory. The society organized to promote Kalmyk cultural renewal, extensively described by Adelman (1960), was an attempt to rise above the level of the societies. However, it has merely provided an additional field for the rival political activities of the societies as units, and many feel it should be kept 'weak'. Except for the active participation of a very few individuals, this society appeared to be moribund at the time of the author's fieldwork, though its ideals were verbally supported by most Kalmyks.

In conclusion, it should be noted that those older leaders who were in the forefront in establishing separate societies in the



United States are moving away from positions of power. Their places are being taken by younger men who are in some cases being elected by default for lack of interested opposition. This, however, has not resulted in a diminution of rivalry between leaders of different societies. But the 'political climate' is no longer as rife with factionalism, perhaps because permanent lines, in the form of the societies, have been formed.

## NOTES

1. There are some variations in the types of material culture traits which have been assimilated from the host culture which may be attributable to the semi-rural/urban axis which coincides with this division of population. This is exemplified in female fashion. The young women in Philadelphia are a little more sophisticated in their dress, having easier access to the big city department stores than do those in Freewood Acres.

2. Adelman's earlier investigation had revealed hostility to formal questionnaires — undoubtedly a result of their experiences with the endless interrogations as displaced persons after the war. The author found, however, that in an informal atmosphere, they were very eager to discuss all aspects of their life and culture; they were willing to submit to endless informal questioning and volunteered information on all kinds of subjects. As the group numbers only about 1,000, the author, living with a Kalmyk family, was able to meet many members of the group in the course of her attendance at all the various functions, rites and ceremonies and during the formal period of visiting associated with the annual Tsagan Sar celebration. The author recorded the names of individuals with whom she came into contact, including information regarding the composition of their families and households and their various kin relationships and group affiliations which, together with supplementary data obtained from key informants, provided the author with a large body of information on family composition and residential and kin affiliation covering most of the members of the group without the aid of a formal census. It is this data which was used in our analysis. A census was attempted near the end of the field work period using the assistance of several members of the Society for the Preservation of Kalmyk Culture, the group interested in the revitalization of Kalmyk culture. Perhaps because of the extent of the questionnaire consisting of 25 detailed questions, the nature of the questions or the negative attitudes towards this method of collecting data, the characteristic hostility was again evident and the project was unsuccessful.

3. It is felt to be more important to remodel the outside of the house first because 'it is important to show a nice house so as not to be ashamed'.

4. This information was obtained from the head of the local school district which encompasses Freewood Acres.

5. Consult Miller (1960) for an extensive discussion of monastery economy and organization, and Adelman (1960) and his sources for a more extensive historical survey of the rise and spread of Lamaism and its interrelationship with the political struggles of the period. The author has found that most Kalmyks are not acquainted with the historical background of their religion.

6. To maintain consistency, Adelman's designations will be utilized: Don A for the Philadelphia unit and Don B for the Don Society in Fréewood Acres.

7. There is a definite variation in the observances of ritual in the Astrakhan and in the Buzāva temples. During the period of field work, the author attempted to observe both versions of a particular rite which was possible on occasion because of the scheduling of these rites at somewhat different times. The author focused on lay participation and the variations noted are in this area. As neither the author nor most of the laity are conversant with the elaborate Tibetan prayer and ritual, we do not know what variations, if any, exist in the prayer and in the intricacies of ritual.

8. The description which follows is as observed by the author at the Astrakhan Temple.

9. This is the usual procedure when one enters the temple or other designated holy place or when placing something in front of the household shrine, and it is performed by all, even the youngest child. This genuflection consists of touching one's hands, palm to palm, and placing them first above the forehead, then to the forehead, face and upper part of the body and then prostrating oneself and twice touching the forehead to the ground.

10. His very presence is felt to be therapeutic and often he is called in to calm and quiet very young colicky children. He may visit households once a month or sometimes stay a week in a particular household to bless the family and pray for well-being.

11. After the syncretism between Tibetan Lamaism and the early shamanistic beliefs occurred, any new forms which were later incorporated came from the original source, Tibet. Thus, when religious revitalization occurred in the nineteenth century (as documented by Adelman [1960]), the source of new and more complex traits was Tibet.

12. Consult Adelman (1960) for the full details of these efforts.

13. Data concerning the principles of social structure of the present unit will be discussed in a separate chapter at the end of this section after the chapters on Tsagan Sar and the institution of marriage, rather than at this juncture, in order to allow the reader to view them operatively prior to the more abstract theoretical discussion.

14. The author, in addition to her own observations, had drawn to some extent on Adelman (1960) for a delineation of the internal political spheres since it was difficult, if not impossible, for the author as a female to be privy to this sphere of life in which men alone participate.

## CHAPTER V

### TSAGAN SAR

#### Introduction

In terms of intensity of preparation, duration, sustained interest and maximization of interaction, and concurrently, the reinforcement, within a formal context, of the body of one's social relationships, the focal point of the year for the Kalmyks has been and continues to be the celebration of Tsagan Sar (Tsaġān Sar) (hereafter sometimes referred to as Tsagan), the Buddhist White Month and the formal beginning of the New Year as reckoned by the Kalmyk lunar calendar. It is during this annual celebration, within the context of a series of formal visits made and reciprocated through a standardized procedure using standardized paraphernalia, that these social relationships are renewed and reinforced. Accordingly, an examination of the institutional complex of this focal celebration is important in our consideration of Kalmyk continuity and change and will also serve to illuminate the present Kalmyk social structure. It will be seen that, under certain conditions, shifts are taking place from the utilization of the traditional patrilineal bias as a basis for social relationships, in order to permit the maintenance of the personal social spheres which combine to form the social network which in turn maintains the group as a social unit. Tsagan thus acts as a window through which may be seen the structure of social relationships and their operation within the Kalmyk social unit in America.

The Kalmyks as Lamaist Buddhists, adhere to a lunar calendar which begins the new year with the first month of spring, the month of Lu, which is approximately mid-February. The annual ceremonial and ritual cycle is tied to this calendar. As was previously observed, the religion of the Kalmyks includes many pre-Buddhist elements. Some Kalmyk intellectuals cite, for example, the mythological background of the ceremony as evidence of the 'pre-Buddhist' origin of Tsagan (Oulanov 1959:4). Though very early pre-Buddhist Mongol historical sources do not provide specific information concerning particular celebrations, the universality of a celebration such as

Tsagan at this time of year among Mongol peoples would support such a priority, particularly in view of the multitude and similarity of secular, non-Buddhist aspects which do not appear to be part of the New Year celebrations of Tibetan or other Buddhist peoples.<sup>1</sup>

Further evidence of such pre-Buddhist origins may be noted in the co-existence of two legendary explanations which form the mythological and symbolic background of the celebration. The first story is by far the most frequently told. It is the only explanation for the meaning of the holiday known by many if not most of the laity. It was stated as follows by one informant:

There was to be born a monster as the child of a devil. After the birth, the monster was supposed to eat all the people of the world. The gods met to decide what to do. One goddess, *Ökn Tenger*, decided that she would become his wife. She became the devil's wife and got with child. The child had not been born and her husband went somewhere. She went into labor, and when the child was born, he started to eat blood right away (eating the after-birth). But his mother, *Ökn Tenger*, made him die after fighting with him. She fought with him all night and she won just before morning. The gods prayed for her all night until she won. All the people think she saved us.

The second explanation which follows Buddhist tradition and is the official clerical explanation, views the celebration as symbolic of the victory of Buddhism over all heresies. It tells of the victory of Buddha over six heretical teachers who attempted to refute his doctrine before the king and the people. For fifteen days, Buddha debates with the heretics and performs ever-more spectacular miracles each day until he vanquishes his enemies who, in the end, accept his doctrine as do the people and the king.

Only the second explanation appears in the early accounts of Pallas and Bergmann who visited the Kalmyks at the end of the eighteenth century. However, neither had command of the language. They used Russian interpreters and seem to have had contact primarily with the aristocracy and with the clergy. Bergmann noted that he was housed with the priests attached to the Vice Khan's household during his stay. Nevertheless, their early accounts do provide useful descriptions of the Tsagan celebration in those days.

The Pallas and Bergmann accounts complement and corroborate each other. They record primarily the formal religious aspects of

the celebration — giving little indication of the secular aspects, if there were any existing at the time, which have assumed such importance in the celebration today.<sup>2</sup> However, these early accounts do show continuity of the sacred elements of the celebration as do the briefer accounts of Tsagan Sar recorded by travelers and observers who visited the Kalmyks during the nineteenth century.

### Historical Background

According to Pallas (1776, II:190-197) and Bergmann (1804:160-170; 1825:227-233) preparations for Tsagan Sar usually began in the preceding month. Bergmann records the daily practice playing of religious instruments in the temple despite the intense cold.<sup>3</sup> During the last six or seven days preceding the day of Tsagan, prayers were offered by the priests in the temple. The number of prayer sessions multiplied as the day of the celebration approached. Religious music was an integral part of these prayer periods. He notes that the devout members of the laity felt the need to participate in the temple prayer during these days as did the full hierarchy of the clergy. The final night was devoted entirely to prayers. (Neither account indicates whether the laity also spent the night in the temple in prayer.) The altar within the temple was adorned with the best cloths and beautiful tapestries of the holy images. In addition to the usual cups of offerings trimmed with molded paste figures in the shape of pyramids which were called dorm.

Just before sunrise, the priests gathered outside in front of the temple in an area from which the snow had been removed. An image of the historical Buddha Šākjamūni protected by an umbrella was raised so that it would be able to receive the first rays of the sun. A group of priests formed a semi-circle around the picture; the three most esteemed priests with temple bells in their hands were seated on pieces of felt under the picture. On both sides of the picture stood the instrumentalists. A sacrificial table with cups of offerings and the small dorm, or pyramid of dough, stood nearby. In a large bowl was a great dorm covered with strips of butter from which cords were laid out running up the sides of the image. At the moment of the sun's rising, a resounding song was heard. The prayer then continued, the priests occasionally looking at the prayer sheets written in Tibetan which were spread on their knees.

The laity gathered from all sides and walked around the temple to the right and then prostrated themselves three times before the image. Bergmann records that the praying continued for nearly an

hour (1829:229). After the prayer, the priests and the laity moved into a large tent adjoining the temple into which the image of Buddha and the large dorm and the cups of offerings were also brought. Another short prayer was chanted by the priests after which they suddenly arose and each approached the images hung on the wall and touched them with his forehead. The laity then did the same. The priests then drew back and embraced each other reciprocally, 'crying mendou [mendə] (are you well, have you gone out well). A hundred people, each one calling mendou a hundred voices resound at once and one hundred voices at the same time repeat a hundred times the same word.' (Bergmann 1804:168). After several moments, the priests again seated themselves and tea and spirits were brought in and distributed to them and to the guests who had by then formed themselves into rows. Pieces of jellied meat were distributed and after a while the gathering dispersed.

Bergmann describes the Vice Khan's return to his tent after the ceremony where, seated with his wife close to the entrance to the tent, he received and returned the special Tsagan greeting. This special greeting was customarily given to all one met at this time. If tendered by a commoner to a person of high stations, it consisted of a bow by the commoner with the right hand of the noble to the commoner's shoulder and the commoner's hand at the level of the noble's hip, while both said mendə. If both were of equal station, they would clasp one another on the shoulders and say mendə. It was also proper to carry in one's waistband cakes, sugar, dried fruit and raisins which were reciprocally exchanged as presents at the time of this greeting. If an individual was not encountered during the period of the celebration, this greeting was used when meeting him for the first time after Tsagan even though it was many weeks later.

After the reception, the Vice Khan proceeded with his wife to the tent of his mother (his father was deceased) to formally present to her his respects and greetings for Tsagan. Then he went to the Supreme Lama and tendered his respects which the latter later reciprocated by a visit to the Vice Khan's tent. The nobles tendered their greetings and respects first to the Vice Khan and then visited the Supreme Lama to receive his blessing. With the arrival of the Supreme Lama in the tent of the Vice Khan, a banquet was held. The Supreme Lama and other clergy and the highest nobles held the elevated seats of honor, while the rest of the guests seated themselves at various locations inside the tents. Commoners were also invited by public proclamation. Women guests were served in a separate tent. Vessels containing soup with meat and cooked rice, butter and

raisins were served. Russian and Tatar wine were brought in large buckets. To refuse a drink was deemed an insult. Even the priests, whose abstinence dictated that they only fleck the surface of the wine with their fingers, 'sought to recoup from the time of abstinence' (Bergmann 1825:232). Female singers would sing drinking songs to anyone who was inclined not to drink. Singing, dancing and drinking as well as various amusements continued on into the night.

During the remaining six days of the celebration, feasting and drinking took place in the nobles' and other tents. On the eighth day, a prayer or fast day (Matsaq) was held. From the eighth to the fifteenth day, the clergy — including priests from far off aimaks — participated in prayer assemblies, during which time souls lost through heresy were prayed for. This was also the period for the ordination and confirmation into the ranks of the clergy.

In the more remote camps, the celebration of Tsagan was a watered-down version of what occurred at the headquarters of the Vice Khan. Pallas (1776)<sup>4</sup> describes the celebration in a remote aimak where three of the lesser ranked clergy participated in the ceremony. The ceremonies took place in the tent of the geln, the highest ranked of the three priests. His tent was adorned with all the sacred objects he possessed. After the two lesser priests paid the geln the formalities of respect, they seated themselves next to him and the laity filed in, first praying before the sacred images and objects and then kneeling before the priests in succession with their heads to their knees, the priest touching each head with his prayer beads. The lay person then took his scarf from his waistband and bestowed upon the priest some raisins, a fig, a plum, dates or a piece of sugar and received from the priest something similar taken from the altar. This was repeated with the other priests and, finally, all the laity present greeted each other in this special way.

The importance of Tsagan was also noted by those who visited the Kalmyks during the nineteenth century. These accounts supplement the records of Pallas and Bergmann. Nefed'ev noted that the celebration which lasted seven days commemorated not only the victory of one deity over the wicked spirits but also marked the Kalmyks' departure from their winter camp 'going out from a state of torpidness. At this time, they meet in joyous spirit and mutually make presents to one another or exchange different clothing, fruits and money' (1834:164). Unfortunately, Nefed'ev's brief account does not provide us with any of the details as do the prior accounts.



Nebol'sin, writing two decades later, refers to Tsagan Sar as the most solemn holiday of the Kalmyk year (1852:120). After a brief reiteration of the religious aspects as previously recorded, he proceeds to detail some of the other activities which took place during the two weeks of the festival. (Note the seeming extension in the duration of the celebration.) During the continuous celebration which marked these two weeks, the Kalmyks visited many acquaintances to express their best wishes for the season. On the first day of the holiday, it was customary to extend these good wishes to relatives and to close acquaintances in a formal manner. Special salutations had to be given by the younger to their elder relations. The younger would go to the tent of his elder, as for example, a son to his father, and without removing his hat, would kneel on his right knee, putting his fingers to his forehead and saying the formal greeting while moving his right shoulder towards the elder. The elder individual would touch the younger's shoulder with his hand and salute him. Though it was not customary to shake a stranger's hand, at this time even strangers were greeted in a way characteristic of the Tsagan season; that is, to set palm to shoulder, then touch hands and hail one another with the greeting 'mendë.'

One of the last written accounts of the Kalmyks prior to the Revolution is that of Zhitetski (1893). He noted that the Kalmyks as pastoralists had few festivals as compared with other people, and that even on these few occasions, not all attended for they practiced a 'cattle rearing economy which makes it impossible to have interruptions of more than one day because the cattle need constant and uninterrupted care' (Zhitetski 1893:42). He observed, however, that Tsagan Sar was an exception. He states that at this time most Kalmyks dressed festively, prepared special foods and received guests in their homes. Several days of prayer generally preceded the day of Tsagan, but in some places it was only for one day. (The temple in Tsuxorovski Aimak is cited as an example.) The festival continued for seven more days during which time the people greeted one another with the special Tsagan greeting and exchanged nutmeg and cakes. The festival ended on the eighth day with an entire day of prayer.

From this all too fragmentary historical background, we may extrapolate certain features which seem to be of continued importance and which we will keep in mind as we begin our examination of the celebration as it is now practiced by the Kalmyk group in America. In addition to the religious aspects which symbolized a renewal of life, the occasion also marked the renewal of the annual seasonal cycle upon which the Kalmyks' pastoral nomadic existence depended.

This was also a time of social renewal and reemphasis — just before the spring migration when the larger winter nomadic units would begin to fractionalize for the summer months. It was a time of renewal of allegiance to the Khan and of a reiteration of one's social relationships through definite formalized procedures emphasizing the elements of visiting and exchange of gifts.<sup>5</sup> One might say that Tsagan Sar was a time for renewal of Kalmyk life for another year. As we shall see, this important concept of annual renewal for Kalmyk life and society has been carried forward to the present day.

### The Institution Today

We will now examine the features which characterize the present-day celebration of Tsagan Sar, the role that the traditional patterns play and, more importantly, the meaning and function of the celebration for the Kalmyks in America. Older informants recounted for the author the details of Tsagan celebrations which they had witnessed prior to the Revolution, afterwards during the period between the wars as well as during their period as displaced persons. These accounts are, in many basic features, in accord with the celebration as witnessed and participated in by the author in 1961. Accordingly, we will not separately describe the celebration during these various periods, but rather, we will discuss the differences and variations as they arise in the course of our description and analysis. It is in these very differences and variations that we shall see the adjustments that have been made to perpetuate the institution and the network of social relationships which it serves to renew each year.

### Preparation

Preparation for the celebration of Tsagan, which officially lasts a month, may begin as much as a month in advance. The women begin to purchase extra flour for making borts'k and many bags of candy, nuts, cookies and other food items and they may also begin to purchase bottles of vodka at this time. Ladies' handkerchiefs and kerchiefs, blouses, dresses and dress materials and men's shirts and handkerchiefs in varying numbers as well as several special items such as gold jewelry to be given as gifts will also be purchased in advance. These items represent a partial shift from the cows, sheep, gold jewelry and rubles, shirts and dress materials

which traditionally constituted gifts (see Appendix A). The women may also begin to make new clothing for themselves and their children. The number of purchases made is usually dependent upon the financial situation of the family. The expenses incurred during Tsagan may reach several hundred dollars. Informants indicate that even if members of a household are unemployed, they will borrow money, if necessary, in order to obtain the minimal amount of items, 'for one must buy something'.

Preparations for the festive ball which is usually held during the course of the month-long celebration may also begin at this time. However, actual details are usually left to the last minute. The ball is sponsored by one or another of the societies. This period just before Tsagan is sometimes referred to as the 'counting' or 'accounting' days, referring to the counting of the number of days to Tsagan. Some of the older people will make informal visits during this time, sometimes bringing small bottles of vodka or candy and giving money to the children.

Several days prior to the formal beginning of the celebration, the women will take time off from their work as seamstresses to begin what amounts to a full-scale spring cleaning of the house — washing all the linen, changing slip covers and drapes and washing and waxing all the floors. All the members of the household, including the men, aid in the various tasks. Then the woman of the house starts the cooking and baking. Large amounts of borts'k, the traditional cakes, are made from the fifteen to twenty pounds of flour which has been accumulated during the month. In addition to the usual square or twisted shapes, several other decorative forms are made especially for the celebration. One of these special forms, called xōrxā (insect) borts'k, is in the shape of little croutons and is used to amuse the children. Other elaborate forms are made for use as part of the offering placed at the household shrine or as part of the offering taken to the temple on the first night. The xutsā is another special form of borts'k which is made in the shape of a sheep's head. Only a few xutsā are made and as we shall see, they have a particular importance in the formal secular aspect of Tsagan.

Large amounts of other foods, including meat loaves, potato salad, stuffed cabbage and borscht are also prepared for the guests who will come during the first days of the celebration.<sup>6</sup> The cooking continues during the two or three days that precede the beginning of the celebration, with activity mounting sometimes to a fever pitch as the evening on which the ceremony commences draws near.

According to accounts of older informants, these extensive preparations were always characteristic of the Tsagan celebration.

'From the chests, the best bright things and great cloths were drawn out and suspended around the house' (Oulanov 1959:4). All recount that the younger women of the extended family, the residential unit of that period, were put to work making borts'k, home-made vodka and preparing the meats and other foods. From the point of view of the economic cycle, this was a particularly hard time of the year as it came at the end of the winter period when food for both family and cattle was in short supply. The animals were thin and the cows stopped giving milk until the time just after Tsagan started when the spring calving began. Preparations in those early days began two or three months in advance with the setting aside of flour, fat, butter and strips of dried meat. One informant indicated that even before the winter began, they thought about such preparations. In Russia, after the Revolution and later in the thirties during the 'hungry days,' preparations were made, 'so much as you can, the best you got,' even if only small amounts of borts'k were made. As times improved, small gifts such as kerchiefs and men's handkerchiefs were purchased.

### Religious Aspects

The first night of Tsagan finally arrives. At about six o'clock in the evening, the entire family or, if the wife is still busy with preparations, the man of the house and the children dress in their best clothes and proceed to the temple.<sup>7</sup> They carry a large paper bag containing many pieces of borts'k including some of the fancy shapes, pieces of which have already been placed before the household shrine by the woman of the house, one-quarter or one-half pound of butter, tea, oranges, nuts, apples and sometimes bars of candy. This constitutes their offering, dēdži, and is said to represent 'the food of the people.'

Upon entering the temple, the man places the offering at the foot of the table which is to the front and center of the altar. The priests are already seated in their accustomed places in hierarchical order with the highest ranked seated closest to the altar. As more families arrive, the number of offerings mounts. More tables are brought in by one of the priests and placed in front of the altar. In the center of each of these tables is placed a molded figure formed of dough and covered with a rose-colored glaze — the dorm. Around this is heaped a portion of the offering brought in by the laity. On another table is a large tray of cooked lamb meat and bones; still another table contains borts'k and cookies.

After the man has placed the offering at the altar, the family, including the children, makes the usual genuflection or obeisance to the highest ranking priest, touching forehead to the edge of the table placed before him and then to several religious relics and the prayer wheel in succession. Monetary offerings are left at each point, sometimes change and sometimes a one-dollar or a five-dollar bill. Then the family moves to the back of the temple opposite the altar and sits down on low benches. Those who have prayer beads begin to manipulate them while saying the prayer prescription, the Omni. Others take hold of the long rope which moves the prayer wheel located to the side of the altar. The chanting of the priests continues, punctuated periodically by music played by the priests on the various Kalmyk religious instruments — the drum, cymbals and bells.<sup>8</sup>

During the ceremony, as usual there is no active participation by the laity in the chanting and movements of the clergy. After the members of the laity make their initial obeisance, their active participation is usually limited to the movements of their prayer beads and the prayer wheel and the saying of the religious prescription, though they appear imbued with religious emotion generated by the various aspects of the ritual. While the priests begin their chanting at a prescribed hour, people arrive with their offerings at their own convenience and leave when they wish. This has no effect on the clergy's activity and further reiterates the lack of a more direct relationship between the clergy and the laity within the ritual and symbolic context of the service. It confirms the traditional conception that lay participation in any rite is not necessary to insure their well-being as it is the priests through their prayers who provide for the salvation of all.

The chanting of the prayers continues until late in the evening when it is stopped and the people return to their homes. Traditionally, the service continued all through the night. This was the case during the first emigration, but here in the United States the prayer is interrupted and continues the following morning one or two hours before sunrise when the laity return to the temple.<sup>9</sup>

As they enter, the laity make obeisance to the altar, some again going up to the highest ranking priest and to the religious relics. Some women have brought pots of hot Kalmyk tea which they place on the floor in front of the altar. The prayer chants and periodic musical accompaniment continue until the moment of dawn. At that point, the prayer chant ceases and the musical instruments are put away. All the priests rise from their places and move to the front of the altar and solemnly bow their heads in prayer. They return to their places, take up white scarves and, in the order of

their ecclesiastical rank, proceed to drape these scarves over the picture of the Dalai Lama which is located to one side of the altar. They return to their seats and each priest, in turn, presents a white scarf to the highest ranking priest present. He, in turn, presents each priest with a white or a yellow scarf and a box of cookies. Each priest then presents a white scarf to the other higher-ranking priests in order of their rank. Then, the priests lower in the hierarchy exchange scarves among themselves. This series of exchanges proceeds as the lay participants quietly look on.

After all the priests are again seated in their accustomed places, the lay participants line up, going first to the highest ranking priest and then to the others in order of their rank, presenting each with a scarf and to those lower in the hierarchy, a dollar bill. The priests in return hand out candy bars. The members of the laity then informally exchange pieces of chocolate and joyously embrace one another saying the traditional 'mendě garvā' (have you gone out well); with the traditional response 'mendě, mendě.' These exchanges are reminiscent of Bergmann's description (see page 138). Cups of Kalmyk tea and pieces of borts'k are then passed among the laity. One of the lower ranking priests distributes pieces of the molded dough forms, the dorm, which was displayed on the altar. The members of the laity slowly leave the temple; some return to their homes while others visit the religious establishment in the neighborhood run by the academic lama, to make obeisance to him and to his altar and to receive his blessing before returning home.

The service in the Don Temple begins somewhat later in the evening than at the Astrakhan Temple, probably to allow travel time for the lay adherents of the temple who live in Philadelphia or in New Brunswick. By the time the service begins at about nine o'clock, many people are already seated on the wooden folding chairs toward the back of the temple, their offerings having already been placed before the altar or near the side wall. Since there are only two resident priests two members of the laity, adults or children, are usually enlisted just before the beginning of the service, to assist in the striking of the drum and the gong at the appropriate time on signal from the priests who, themselves, manipulate the cymbals and the bell. The chanting of the priests begins. As additional people arrive, they make obeisance just inside the door of the temple but do not go up to the priests or to the religious relics at this time as is done in the Astrakhan Temple.

In all religious ceremonies and rituals held at Don Temple B in New Jersey, the procedure is to make obeisance on entering. At the end of the service, the laity line up, receive their blessings from the two priests and make their monetary offerings. They

then make obeisance to the religious relics, including the ash remains of two famous lamas which this temple contains, and then leave the temple. This is in contrast to all services held in the Astrakhan temple where obeisance and monetary offerings are made to the highest ranking priest and to the religious relics upon entering; and only sometimes, as on Tsagan, are they performed on leaving as well.

After about two hours of chanting, the priests frequently signal an intermission, informing the laity that the ceremony will continue at six o'clock the next morning. Some choose to return to their homes for the night. All leave the temple, and about twenty minutes later, the remainder of the laity and the priests return to the temple and the service continues for another brief period and then is stopped for the night. Most of the people who have come from Philadelphia to attend the service spend the night with relatives in the neighborhood in order to participate in the concluding phase of the ceremony the next morning.

The ceremony begins the next morning and chanting continues until sometime after dawn (about an hour after the Astrakhan ceremony is completed). A plate of borts'k, candy and nuts is passed around by the lay leader of the congregation and each person takes something from the plate. A plate of Russian halva (a sweet candy) is also passed around. The laity rise and form a line making, in turn, obeisance to each of the priests and then to the relics while leaving monetary offerings. The priests and laymen return to the priests' house where scarves are formally presented to the priests and a communal feast is held, as is usual after all Don Kalmyk temple rites. The women of the society which supports the temple have prepared maken, the traditional meat and onion stew and Kalmyk tea from items donated by the laity as a part of their offering. These are served along with borts'k and cookies which were also donated.

As noted above, the temple service in earlier times usually lasted all night. This tradition was maintained by the 'old emigré' groups in the period between the two wars both in Bulgaria and in Yugoslavia and is still maintained in France. During the Soviet period in Russia, religious services and religion in general were outlawed, temples and monasteries closed and priests, in some cases, sent to Siberia. Despite this, people still had their prayer beads and prayer wheels and recount how they often prayed in secret. When some of the clergy began to return from exile in Siberia in the late thirties, they held secret religious services in the houses of

laymen interested in religious affairs. An informant recounts that his father, who was interested in religious affairs, helped a priest assemble things for Tsagan but was later arrested. The priest disappeared but the informant's father managed to escape.

Since astrological functions had always been vested in the clergy, the disruption of the formal religious organization by the new regime resulted in confusion as to the date for the celebration. However, one informant indicated that in his village there was one priest who remained 'who was not recognized as being a priest.' He ascertained the day of the beginning of the celebration and it was passed on to the other villages. Another informant recounts that even during the period of forced labor in World War II, two priests in their camp conducted religious services. This particular informant was born and raised under Soviet rule and this service in the prison camp was the very first religious celebration he had ever witnessed.

### Secular Aspects

After the morning celebration at the temple is concluded, the laity return to their homes and the entire family sits down to a feast utilizing some of the food which has been accumulated and prepared during the preceding days. The table is laden with food, including stuffed cabbage, meat loaf, potato salad and lettuce and tomato salad. When all are seated at the table, the wife rises and moves to where her husband is seated. He rises and formally embraces her. His children rise and come to him in order of age, the oldest first, for his formal embrace. The wife fills one-ounce glasses with vodka for all the adults present, whereupon the man raises his glass and makes a toast or short speech expressing his hope for the unity of the family for the coming year and for their continued health and well-being. All drink up, emptying their glasses. He may then give his children some coins in honor of the occasion. If the composition of the household includes a member or members of a senior third generation, either parents or close or distant relatives of the married couple, then it is to these individuals that the other members of the family first pay their respects; they are served first by the younger woman of the house, and they make the toasts for the coming year. After the toast is drunk, the empty glass is returned to the young woman with a coin, a bill or some kind of jewelry in it and the other members of the household may receive coins and bills as well. Then, all commence eating.



This family feast sets the stage for the series of formal visits which are made during the course of the month-long celebration. The visits themselves involve certain definite procedures which are followed in greater or lesser detail and involve presentation and receipt of certain kinds of material goods. As we shall see, the sequence or order of these visits and the variations in the procedure and in the quantity and selection of goods exchanged during these visits are interrelated and, in turn, as dependent variables, relate to the structuring of social relationships among the Kalmyks.

Immediately after the feast, the family usually starts its round of visiting.<sup>10</sup> The first and most important visit is made to those individuals who are considered to be the closest relatives of the family. These were traditionally the closest patrilineal relatives of the husband who were not part of the household such as husband's father's older brother or husband's father's father's brother. At the present time, however, several important factors which will be discussed below have caused this category of 'closest relatives' to be composed of individuals of various categories of kin relationship.

The visit is usually made by the entire household, including the aged and the very young children. The woman of the family takes along a large paper bag containing a few pieces of borts'k — including one piece in the shape of a ram's head, the xutsă — apples, cookies, oranges, candy, nuts, one-quarter or one-half pou of butter and a quart, a fifth or a pint of the best vodka depending upon the financial circumstances of the family.<sup>11</sup> With the exception of the vodka and xutsă, these items parallel the offering which was brought to the temple the night before, and they are consciously conceived of as an offering of dědži.

After her family enters the house and removes their coats, the woman takes the items from the bag and places them with the xutsă on a plate given to her by the woman of the household being visited. The guests and hosts seat themselves around the kitchen or dining-room table. The visiting woman places the plate containing the items together with the bottle of vodka on the table in front of the senior man of the household. In the meantime, the woman of the household has set a place for each guest and has started to serve Kalmyk tea. A tray with one-ounce glasses has also been placed on the table near the senior man. The visiting woman then opens the bottle of vodka which she has brought and fills a one-ounce glass from the tray. Kneeling, she presents it to the senior man of the household. (If the member of the senior generation living in the household visited is a female, then it is to her that the visiting woman presents the vodka.) The man takes the glass and holding

it up, makes a formal toast of hopes and good wishes for the coming year, the unity of the family and so forth.<sup>12</sup> He drinks the vodka in one swallow and then hands the glass back to the woman after placing money or sometimes gold jewelry into it. Then the man of the visiting family pours a second 'shot' from the bottle of vodka and presents it to the senior man of the household. Another toast is made and drunk by the senior man and the two men formally embrace, saying 'mendě, mendě' to one another, but there is no formal return of the glass with a monetary gift.

The visiting woman, and, in turn, the visiting man each present one-ounce glasses of vodka to the woman of the household. She drinks some and embraces them. The children of the visiting family formally embrace the senior man and the senior woman, receiving gifts of coins from them. If the household being visited contains an adult generation in addition to the most senior generation, e. g., a son and his wife, the man and woman of the visiting family may merely embrace each of them, saying again 'mendě, mendě.'

Some informants question whether it is the husband or the wife of the visiting family who first presents the vodka to the senior man. The author observed the woman making the first presentation in the great majority of cases no matter how the household was related, though there were a few times when the man presented the vodka first, but there did not appear to be a correlation with any particular category of relationship; it was merely a result of immediate circumstances. In any event, the vodka is always presented first to the most senior member of the household even though the visiting family's relationship may not be to that individual. Thus, where the visiting family is related to the husband, the presence of the wife's mother in the household would necessitate the presentation being addressed first to her and then to the others for 'respect to the older generation always comes first.' Today, both Astrakhan and Don Kalmyks, male and female, may formally embrace and present the vodka to all relatives, whereas one Astrakhan states that one formally embraced only one's father and mother and that to others one crossed hands, saying 'mendě.' The formal presentation of vodka, the toast and the embrace are collectively referred to as the tsagālxa and this, in turn, is differentiated from merely placing the bottle on the table, opening it and serving drinks as is done when one visits friends.

After these formalities, the man of the house opens his own bottle of vodka and fills all of the one-ounce glasses on the tray which are served to the adult visitors. The man visiting offers a return toast of good wishes for the new year and all are supposed to

empty their glasses in one swallow. The women of the household begin to serve the food which they have prepared.<sup>13</sup>

The guests are served maken and are encouraged to fill their plates from the various platters on the table. One is expected to eat at least some of the food, even though one may make a succession of visits within a short space of time. More rounds of drinks are poured from both vodka bottles and the host encourages all present to drink, the ideal being to empty the glass in one swallow so as to be ready for the next refill. Each time a round of drinks is poured, all present must drink in courtesy to the host.<sup>14</sup> As a bottle of vodka is exhausted, another is brought to the table by the host. Several bottles may be consumed if the visit is of long duration.

Toward the end of the meal, the woman of the household presents several gifts, not formally wrapped, to all the members of the visiting family. Sometimes the gift is draped over the shoulders of the guest. These gifts may consist of a blouse or dress material for the woman, a shirt or a handkerchief for the man and clothing for the children. Shirts and blouses are purchased in average sizes and are given to all regardless of their actual size. It is the gesture of gift-giving that is important and not whether the gift is actually of use. Sometimes there will be traditional Kalmyk singing and dancing, particularly if a large quantity of vodka has been consumed.

Sooner or later the visit ends and the guests continue on to another house, for several visits are made before the family returns home to welcome those who will come to visit or to return a visit. According to the accounts of older informants, this basic form of the visit has been continued in the same general way from pre-revolutionary times to the present day.

The cycle of visiting continues throughout the month of Tsagan, though most of the visiting today is concentrated in the first two weeks and the weekend of the festive ball. Many Astrakhan Kalmyks concentrate their visiting in the first week.<sup>15</sup> They sometimes comment jokingly about the Don Kalmyks' extension of the celebration to include the whole month. There is sufficient flexibility to allow for a visit to be made after the official end of the celebration if for some reason the visit could not be made earlier. The same procedures are followed in these delayed visits. It is said that the visit must be made even if it is late for 'we must show respect.'

The author was present at such a late visit made during the month of July, several months after the end of Tsagan. In another instance, a New Jersey family had not made Tsagan visits to Philadelphia as had been their custom. Their relatives remarked about the family's lack of respect for their relatives, so that the

family was finally forced to spend Easter week in Philadelphia, making visits a month after the official end of Tsagan. In order to eliminate any possible slight, quarts of vodka rather than the usual pints were brought as part of the offering in the series of visits.

Informants recount that traditionally and ideally the general sequence of visits was as follows:

Households of Husband's father and mother and paternal grandparents (if these individuals were part of the same household, the presentation of vodka and the xutsă and the return of the empty glass with the ring or money took place at the same time as the family feast).

Households of husband's father's brothers in order of their seniority.

Households of husband's father's sisters in order of seniority.

Households of husband's older brothers and sisters in order of seniority, not influenced by sex.

Households of other close patrilineal relatives of husband senior to him in age or generation up to the third or fourth degree.

Household of husband's mother's parents.

Households of husband's mother's siblings and other close maternal relatives.

Household of wife's parents.

Households of wife's senior siblings.

Junior relatives always visited those senior to them in age or generation. The senior relative usually reciprocated when the junior relatives in his household made their obligatory visits, but senior relatives were not obligated to return the visits of their juniors. Seniority takes precedence over sex. Thus, an older sister was visited before an older brother who was junior to her in age. Senior relatives and their households received the first visits, often receiving more visits than they might return as there were few senior to them whom they were obligated to visit. They might

return a visit in the course of accompanying the junior members of their households on the latter's obligatory visits. On these return visits, only the junior members of the household participated in the formal presentation of the vodka, although the senior visitor was accorded respect by the junior members of the household being visited. He was presented with vodka, though usually he was merely served a drink by the host along with the other guests.

The formal presentation, known as the tsagālxa or 'wishing well', was traditionally performed by the Astrakhan only once according to informants, when the junior visited the senior in the latter's home. Today, it is performed twice by many of the Don Kalmyks, on the initial visit and on the return visit, but only for those individuals close in age.

In only one type of kin relationship was seniority overridden. This was in the case of mother's brother, naxtsa (naktse), and those in that terminological position which, in this Omaha-type kinship system, includes individuals on several generation levels. Sister's son, zē, was supposed to visit individuals in the category of mother's brother (mother's brother, mother's brother's son, etc.) even if sister's son was older. Even today, when the naxtsa-zē terminology is used for distant and non-traceable extensions, the rule that zē, regardless of age, first visits naxtsa still holds.

This sequence of visits as ideally presented, reveals a scale of degree of closeness of kin relationship for the various categories of relatives for the period just prior to the Revolution, which, in turn, is corroborated by the available ethnographic and historical material. Those relatives visited first were the patrilineal relatives of the man of the house. They were the most important and considered to be the closest. It was these relatives who usually occupied the other tents in the same nomadic encampment and with whom one might corporately own flocks and herds, provided the extended family, as tradition dictated, remained as a single economic unit. We shall see that it is these individuals whom one considers to be his 'family.' They are collectively referred to as 'törl törsn' and are in opposition to one's non-agnatic relatives, collectively termed 'elgn sadn.'

Informants state that it was to these close relatives that first visits were made and to them that one brought the larger amounts of vodka as part of the offering. To them also the woman of the family brought the xutsā, for the men of these families were in the kin category of xadam (xadm), wife's male-in-law, and were senior to husband. The woman, as daughter-in-law or berē, had to tender

them great respect. She was not permitted to speak their names even if she was referring to someone else with the same name.<sup>16</sup> She had to back out of their presence and could not remove her hat while in their presence. It is from the xadam that the berē and the other members of her family receive the better gifts, the gold money, gold jewelry and sometimes animals — cows and sheep, as the record of a visiting cycle of an elderly informant reveals (Appendix A).

The closeness of the relationship might be viewed as an independent variable whose dependent variables are the amount of vodka brought, the value of the gifts given, whether or not the xutsā was brought (for traditionally, the xutsā was brought by the berē only to those in the kin category of xadam including naxtsā xadam or male in-laws through husband's mother) and the chronological position of the visit. The less close the relationship, the later the visit, the smaller the offering and the smaller the gift. These generalities concerning the dependent variables are borne out by the visiting cycles of families here in America.

Even in traditional times, the actual cycle of visits varied in individual cases from the ideal. These variations resulted from a number of factors: differences in the kinds of actual relatives possessed by a particular nuclear family out of the full range of possibilities, relatives' proximity in terms of residence; who lived in the household and possible dislikes and feuds which might be strong enough to override necessary obligations. Nevertheless, older informants indicate that on the whole the sequence was adhered to before the Revolution to the degree to which one's actual range of relatives coincided with the ideal; social arrangements had not as yet been disrupted by later events.

Most persons followed the general outline of the sequence, the husband's relatives being considered the closest and most important. They usually resided in the same nomadic camp or xoton. More distant relatives of the husband resided in nearby camps. Next came relatives of husband's mother, collectively termed naxtsanar, and then came the wife's relatives. More distant relatives on husband's father's side — those referred to as xol törl, relatives beyond the fourth degree, patrilineally reckoned, and yasn relatives, relatives beyond the eighth degree of relationship patrilineally reckoned and in many cases not traceable — were not usually part of the visiting cycle. They were considered to be more distant and usually lived far away. Such relationships, however, were remembered and sometimes were recorded. They might be activated for certain purposes or remembered in reckoning eligibility for marriage, a

prospective mate being required to be beyond the eighth generation on the patrilineal side. Beyond two or three generations, relationships through husband's mother were not usually reckoned nor were relationships other than the immediate family of the wife. There was a practical limit to the number of social relationships which could normally be maintained. Though extended and distant relationships might be remembered, they were usually not included in the circle of those actively maintained social relationships nor were they renewed during Tsagan by a particular nuclear family or household. Informants indicate that social relationships for the family were with its various kin rather than with non-kin individuals.

This ideal sequence of visits is still remembered today and can be elicited from old and young informants alike. But wars and emigration have resulted in the uprooting and movement of people on a haphazard basis. The actual range of relatives which a particular ego or nuclear family has available in its resettlement in the United States may vary greatly from the range which might have been available under normal circumstances. In many cases, all relatives on one side of the family may be deceased and those closer relatives on the other side of the family may also be absent. Genealogical materials and listings of kin relations not traceable but still reckoned as elicited from informants (samples in Appendix B) show the nature of the sphere of kin relationships remembered and maintained today. The very nature of these spheres of relationships, taken in conjunction with the Tsagan cycles of visiting, indicate that many accommodations have been made in each household's circle or network of kin-determined social relationships which are formally renewed annually by the perpetuation of the institution of Tsagan.

Basic changes have not taken place in the form of the celebration, and the sphere of social relationships, still primarily kin-determined, remains. It is the definition and construction of social or kin relationships and that which constitutes a close relationship that have undergone change. It is to those individuals whom a particular family today considers as close that the larger amounts of vodka are brought, to those individuals that the visit is made early in the cycle and to those individuals that the larger gifts are given.

An example is found in the case of Household E2 (see Appendix B for the details of their cycle) where no relatives related through husband are available. Relatives of the wife have moved into the position of close relationship. Behaviorally, they operate as close relatives in the Tsagan cycle; they are visited first, they are

brought a quart of vodka and they are brought xutsă by the wife out of respect even though this was traditionally reserved for her husband's relatives. Fig. 6 shows some of the variations in the categories of relatives to whom xutsă is now being brought. In other cases, relatives related in distant degrees (in some cases the number of degrees or the exact nature of the relationship is not known) may come to occupy, in the absence of close relatives or actual kin on either side, positions of 'close relationship.' Relationship through membership in the yasn — a patrilineally determined kin relationship which in many cases is now no longer traceable and therefore of the sib-type, has also become the basis for inclusion in the Tsagan cycle of visits.

In some instances, individuals of the same aimak (the socio-political unit said to have merely a territorial connotation by the beginning of the twentieth century) say that they are 'related to one another by aimak' and become part of one another's circle of social relationships as if they were kin. Individuals of the same tribal group such as Dörbët and Torgüt also may fall into the position of 'close relationship' in the absence of actual close kin, though they may not use the term 'related.' The feeling of closeness is expressed as 'Now there are only a few Kalmyks here. We feel that people of the same aimak are closer. We feel that being of one aimak is a closer feeling than if we were with large numbers of Kalmyks as in Russia. Dörbët and Torgüt also feel closer to one another in the same way.' In a few instances blood-brother relationships have been created by individuals with few or no kin available. These blood brothers are considered as quasi-patrilineal relations in very close kin relationships and are visited early in the cycle and sometimes xutsă is brought.

In the main, visiting friends during Tsagan has become a practice only in the United States, and even then only on a limited basis. Friends are defined as individuals with whom one has no 'relationship' of any kind. Sometimes one finds that the friend is really some kind of indirect in-law to whom the reference and address term xudnr — children's spouses families — is often applied, though in English the individual may be referred to as a friend. As previously noted, a 'relationship,' though it may not be a traceable kin relationship, is conceived of on a basis other than friendship such as being of the same aimak or same tribal group. The individuals in these categories operate as if they were kin. The number of individuals in the category of friends is small and visits are made to them only when one can afford it. When visiting friends,



Figure 6. Categories of relatives to whom the xutsä was brought.

Household Composition	Relatives of wife through			Relatives of husband through			
	Father- close	Father- yasn	Mother- close	Mother- yasn	Father- close	Father- yasn	Mother- close
Nuclear Family	1 (brother)	1	1 (mother's brother) 1 (mother and brother)		1 (father) 2 (father's sister) 2 (father's brother)	2	1 (mother's brother) 2
Nuclear Family + Husband's Father			1 (mother)			2	
Nuclear Family + Husband's Mother					1 (father's sister) 1 (father's brother)	2	1 (mother's brother) 1 (mother's brother and father's brother's son (same person) 1 (mother's brother's son)
Nuclear Family + Wife's Mother			1 (older sister of wife)				

one does not go through the formalities of the tsagālxa; the bottle is merely placed on the table and opened. However, if a very senior individual is present, the visitors may tsagālxa out of respect to him. These visits to friends are sandwiched in when one has the time, the visit being made only to wish the friend well for the coming year.

Thus, visits are made during Tsagan Sar almost exclusively to individuals with whom one has a 'relationship.' Today, a sphere of social relationship is constituted out of the close, distant or non-traceable relationships that remain and it is this circle of relationships which one is obliged to renew during Tsagan Sar. The constitution of this sphere is characterized by gradations of closeness which resemble in some degree the ideal sequence or scale of degree of closeness. These gradations of closeness are, in turn, correlated with the dependent variables: amount of vodka brought, size of the gift given, whether or not xutsā is brought and the chronological position of the visit. The strong respect relationship between junior and senior, traditionally important, is still maintained. The younger in age and junior in generation must visit his seniors first.

Returning the visit now seems to have taken on added importance. The junior members of a house visited are obligated to return the visits in order to show their respect for their contemporaries. Informants indicate that if the visit is not reciprocated over a period of time, perhaps because the relationship is distant, the visiting party will discontinue his visits, for he feels that the respect tendered by his visit is not being reciprocated and the tie is then broken. An informant recounted a situation in which there was a question of possible relationship to another family. As long as this family continued its visits, they were considered to be relations. Three years ago, they stopped visiting so that the informant now no longer considers them relatives and she states that 'they no longer count us as relatives.' In what are now considered 'close relationships' such a point is never reached except in a feud situation. The divisive forces and arguments that marked the formation of the three religious societies did not seem to affect these spheres of social relationships. This is evidenced by the fact that family and other relationships frequently cross society lines.

Factors of proximity of residence and personal relations still operate to vary the cycles. If a relative who normally should visit one first lives in close proximity to a relative whom one is visiting, the former may be visited also though he should, by tradition, make the visit first. Furthermore, if close relatives live at some distance, one may wait until the first weekend of Tsagan Sar to visit them, in

the meantime making visits to more distant relatives in his own neighborhood. Thus, proximity frequently results in visiting out of the correct chronological order. Proximity may thus be considered a subsidiary variable which affects the dependent variable of chronological position of visit.

The effect of personal relations is also a factor. One informant cites an instance in which her mother's mother's half-sister's son did not come to visit after the informant's father died, as is the custom. This was seen as a lack of respect for the family. Since that time, the informant and her family and her sister's family no longer make Tsagan visits to this individual and he no longer visits them. In another case, a man's wife arrived in the United States alone. When it appeared that her husband would not be able to come to the United States, she became the wife of another man. This precipitated a situation in which relatives of the first husband who have since arrived in the United States no longer socialize with or make or return visits to the relatives of the second husband even though there are individuals in both groups who are related to one another. The presence of these two families at temple celebrations (they belong to the same temple society) has on more than one occasion resulted in arguments and ill-feeling.

These instances of bad relations are not unique even within the small group which constitutes the Kalmyk social unit. Thus, even though 'Tsagan is a time when people who have quarreled must make up,' the author has found that in some instances bad relations may persist for a long period of time. In the main, however, those visits felt to be necessary are made and respect is paid to those to whom one feels respect is due; that is, to those making up one's web or circle of social relationship. And, in a sense, the social world of the Kalmyks is formally renewed for another year.

Examples of Tsagan visiting cycles and accompanying genealogical data showing actual range of relatives available were collected by the author in the field and illustrate these various points. Only one such cycle will be analyzed here. A sample of the remaining examples is appended in chart form.<sup>17</sup> The cycle to be analyzed below is that of Household A.<sup>18</sup> This example illustrates the movement into positions of close relationship as well as variations in the dependent factors. It also illustrates the subsidiary factor, proximity, as this household resides in New Brunswick outside either of the two areas of concentration.

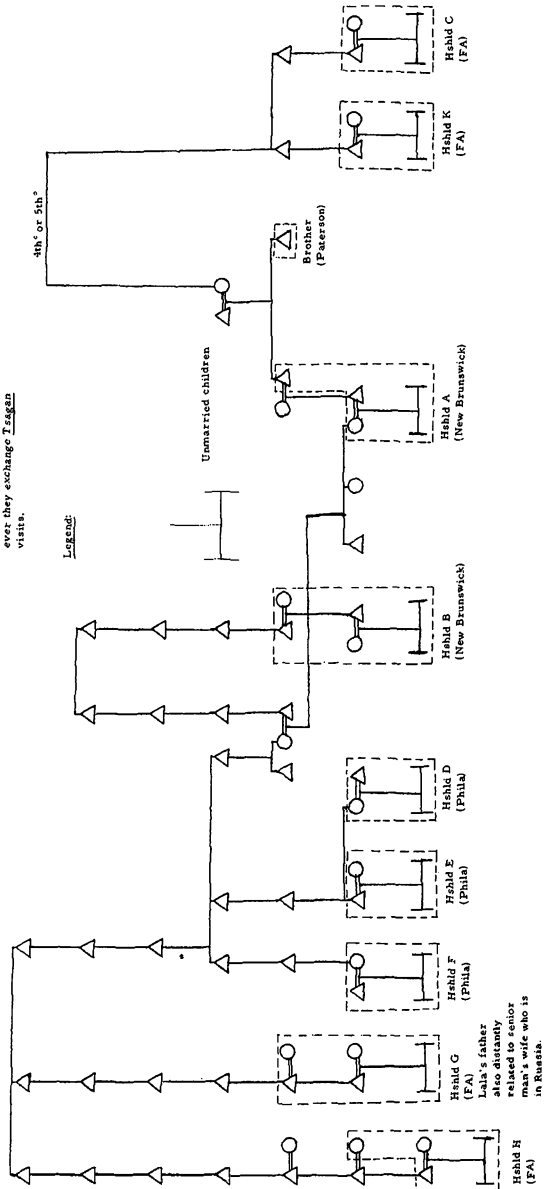
Household A contains a nuclear family; a husband and his wife whom we shall call Badma and Lala, their three young children

### Non-traceable kin relations

Hshlde I, J

Women of these hshids are yash-mates of Lala, but Lala indicated that she does not count them as relatives. How ever they exchange Tsagan visits.

**Legend:**



and Badma's father whom we shall call Chon. Badma and his father are Astrakhan of the Dörbët tribe. Lala is Don Kalmyk but was born in France where her parents lived during the first emigration. She and her husband, who left Russia during the Second World War, were married in France and later moved to the United States. Their marriage is one example of the increasing number of marriages between individuals of these two traditional and sentimental sub-groups of the Kalmyk social unit. Lala and Badma recently bought their own home and both work in New Brunswick. Their children are of school age and Lala is able to work. Chon works part of the year but recently became eligible for social security and will soon retire.

Figure 7 presents a picture of those individuals and households who are considered to be their 'relations' or relatives. This genealogical material was elicited from Lala and is supplemented by information gathered from a master genealogical chart recorded for the family of Lala's mother. This material was obtained apart from the Tsagan cycle in response to the request: "Give the names of all the people you consider relatives or relations of yours by every type of 'relationship'." In order to eliminate repetition, we will not discuss the details of each successive visit, but we will only present the barest outline, indicating the diagnostic features of each. It must be remembered that drinking, eating and merriment are an integral part of every visit. The items brought on each visit will not be enumerated but only the amount of vodka and whether or not xutsā was brought, as these items constitute the dependent variables and operate as indicators of 'closeness.' The offering taken on visits always includes borts'k, candy, nuts, fruit and cookies in varying amounts. We shall refer to these items collectively as 'plus.' The term tsagālxā will again be used to refer to the formal presentation as in our general description of the visit.

On the evening before the first day of Tsagan, Chon's younger brother, who lives in Paterson in a household composed of several single men, came to visit. Both Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxā to him as a member of the senior generation. He had brought a quart of vodka plus. According to Lala, Chon felt that they should remain at home the first day since they had very recently moved into their house. Chon felt that some people might visit, combining a Tsagan visit with a ger erjalg'x — a visit and presentation of a gift made to wish people well on the occasion of moving into a new house. Nevertheless, Badma and Lala did make one visit that first day to Household B which was the only household of relations close by. This household included individuals related through

several degrees to Lala's father; they are her patrilineal relatives. Household C, which was composed of Badma's relations would probably have been visited first had it been in close proximity. Household B was very helpful when the family first came to this country. As an indication of the closeness felt by Household A, a quart of vodka was brought. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the senior man, then, to the senior woman and then to their son and daughter-in-law. Badma received a shirt, Lala an expensive blouse and the children some coins. Chon did not go on this visit.

The next day, Household A received a visit from a friend and his family. This household is also among the few located in New Brunswick and illustrates proximity as a factor in the making of this visit early in the cycle, since the families in New Brunswick usually wait until the first weekend of Tsagan Sar to make visits to Freewood Acres and to Philadelphia. This friend brought wine and cookies. There was no tsagālxa performed and the wine was merely placed on the table. The man received a handkerchief and the lady a blouse.

On the first day of the weekend, the household made a trip to Freewood Acres. The first stop was Household G. Lala reported that she felt close to this household because of the kin relationship of each of her parents to each of the parents of the senior man. Only Lala and Badma and the children went on this visit, Chon having stopped off to chat with some Astrakhan acquaintances. A pint of good vodka plus was brought and Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the senior man and then to his son and daughter-in-law. Badma received a shirt, Lala a blouse and the children some coins. They were joined by Chon and moved on to visit Household C nearby, bringing a pint of vodka plus. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the man and his wife. The man's cousin who now resides with them and is also related to Household A was not at home. Badma and Chon received shirts, Lala five dollars and the children coins. When questioned about the visit to Household G (wife's relatives) before Household C (husband's relatives), Lala gave proximity and personal feelings because of the kin relationship of her parents as the deciding factors.

They then visited Household H. In terms of generation, Lala is senior, while in terms of age, the senior lady of the household is of the previous generation, her son being a contemporary of Lala. Chon was included in this visit. Only Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the senior lady, her son and daughter-in-law. The family brought a pint of vodka plus. Badma and Chon received shirts and Lala a blouse.

The following day, the family made a series of visits in Philadelphia. The first visit was made to Household E. The man of the house was related through Lala's mother. He is considered a close relative, being related within two degrees. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the man and then to his wife. Chon was merely served from the host's bottle. He and Badma received shirts and Lala a good blouse. Then they made a visit to Household D where the lady, a sister of the man in Household E, is also closely related to Lala. A pint of vodka plus was the offering. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the man and his wife. Chon was merely served from the host's bottle. Chon and Badma received shirts and Lala received a piece of material for a dress. They next visited Household F some distance away. The lady of the household was related in the second degree through Lala's mother. A pint of vodka plus was the offering. Badma and Chon received shirts, Lala a skirt and five dollars, and money for the children.

It is interesting to note that a quart of vodka was brought to Household E while only pints were brought to Households F and D though the degree of kin distance is the same. This variation is in accord with the conception of the male consanguine (blood relative) as being more important than the females who marry out of the family into another, even though he is related to the woman (Lala) through her mother. However, respect is still tendered to the female in the form of the visit and the offering.

The next visit made by Badma and Lala and the children was to Household I. Here the senior lady of the household and her daughter are members of the same yasn as Lala's mother. Lala indicated that despite this basis of 'relationship' she does not count them as relatives, although in a different context she said that she considers all members of that yasn as her relatives. These individuals, however, consider her as their relative. Behaviorally, Lala is operating towards this household as if they were relatives and admitted that they were not being visited as friends. The offering brought was a pint of vodka plus. Lala and Badma performed the tsagālxa to the senior lady. Badma received a shirt and Lala a nightgown. Then Badma and Lala went to visit Household J where the lady of the house is the daughter of the senior lady of Household I. The basis for relationship was the same and the same circumstances as discussed above pertain. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the man and lady of the house. Badma received a shirt and Lala a blouse.

During the following week, the household was visited by an Astrakhan friend who is Dörbët and who lives nearby. He brought a pint of vodka plus. There was no tsagālxa. He received a shirt

and his wife a piece of material. The same day another family visited Household A. The man of the family is a member of the same yasn as Lala, but Lala said that she did not consider him to be a relative, only a friend. He brought a pint of vodka but there was no tsagālxa. He received a shirt and his wife a piece of material. (This visit was not reciprocated.) Later that day, Household A received a return visit from Household B. Their offering was a pint of whiskey plus. Both members of the senior generation performed the tsagālxa to Chon. The younger couple performed it to Chon, to Badma and then to Lala. The father and the son received expensive shirts and the mother material and the wife a vase.

The next day, the nuclear family of Household G made a return visit to Household A. Their offering was a quart of vodka plus. The husband and wife performed the tsagālxa to Chon, to Badma and to Lala. The senior man of Household G was not present. The man received a shirt, his wife a suit, the oldest daughter a five ruble gold piece and the other children received material for clothing. The following day, Households E and F and the younger women from Household I made a joint visit. They each brought their own offering. Household E brought a quart of vodka plus, Household F brought a pint of vodka plus and the lady from Household I brought a pint of vodka plus. All visitors performed the tsagālxa to Chon, to Badma and to Lala. The two men received shirts, the ladies from Households E and F received good dresses and the lady from Household I received a blouse.

The following week the family received a return visit from Household C. The offering brought was a pint of vodka plus. The man and his wife performed the tsagālxa to Chon, to Badma and to Lala. The man received a shirt, the lady a suit and the son a camera. Several days later, Household A made its final visit to Household K in Freewood Acres. This visit was not made during the first weekend because the family was not at home. The offering was a pint of vodka plus. Badma and Lala performed the tsagālxa to the man and his wife. Badma received a handkerchief and Lala received a handkerchief with a five ruble gold piece tied in one corner, this being an older Astrakhan way of presenting a gift on Tsagan but which is not followed by many today.

Several days after the official end of Tsagan, the household received another visitor. The man was of the same aimak as Badma and his brother was married to Chon's sister. This visit also was considered as the first visit to the new house, ger erjalg'x. The offering was a quart of vodka plus. The man performed the tsagālxa to Chon, to Badma and to Lala and received a shirt as a gift.



The following week, Household A received a return visit from Household K. The offering was a quart of vodka. The tsagālx was performed only to Chon, since the man was senior to Badma. The man received a shirt. On this same day, the household also received a return visit from Household F. The offering was a pint of vodka plus. The man and woman performed the tsagālx to Chon, to Badma and to Lala. The man received a shirt, the lady a suit and the daughter a five ruble gold piece. Thus ended the cycle of visiting for this family for Tsagan Sar, 1961.

Every household considered a 'relation' was visited by Household A and each of these visits was reciprocated with the exception of Household D. To this household, Household A is more distant because D has a larger number of actual relatives who are in closer relationship than is A. Since Household A is further down D's scale, D did not have the time to return A's visit, although two months later a visit was made. This was in the nature of a visit to the new house and an offering was brought. This visit acted as a return of respect to Household A. In addition, several other visitors came to the house to whom return visits were not made. These were primarily friends and in one case counted as xudnr or family into which one's consanguine has married. This visit was also in the nature of a first visit to the new house. There was no need to return a visit to Chon's brother, a single man with no real household and to whom a visit is not usually reciprocated.

The other examples (Appendix B) show that for some households the number of visits made and received is much larger than for Household A, while for others it is somewhat smaller. The greater number of visits in the cycles of other households reflect, in part, a plethora of relatives, more time and more money and the inclination to keep up an enlarged circle.

The cycle analyzed above and those comprising the rest of the sample (examples of which are in the appendix) show the same general tendencies. For each household there is a sphere of individuals and households which constitutes its more important social relationships. Within this sphere some individuals are reckoned as being closer to the household than others. The characteristics of this sphere of relations and the determination of 'close relationship' show that in an effort to preserve social ties within this general type of structure, substitution on a grand scale has occurred. The absence of relatives in the traditional place of 'close relationship' is filled by others further down the scale of importance who are moved into positions of 'close relationship', while others still further down the scale are moved into these new openings for the first time come within the visiting cycle and the sphere of 'relations'.

For example, in the absence of the category of husbands' relatives, individuals in the category of wife's relatives move into the position of 'close relationship' (Appendix B, Household E2). The different positions within the sphere of relationship characterized by various degrees of closeness of relationship are now held by people in various kin categories. This factor of degree of closeness of relationship is still the determining factor with which the dependent factors — the amount of vodka brought, the presence or absence of xutsā, the value of the gift given and the chronological position of the visit — are in general correlated.

Informants' accounts of Tsagan celebrations during the first emigration, the concurrent Soviet period in Russia and the period in Germany after the war substantiate these conclusions. The offerings brought on the visits and the gifts given in return were as good as circumstances would allow. During the 'hungry days' in Russia, only a little borts'k was brought, everything else being in short supply or unavailable. People frequently shared their few basic staples so that all would have enough to make some borts'k for the celebration. The same factors operated within the sphere of relationship and 'closeness of relationship' as are operative today.

A Don Kalmyk informant recounted that during his youth on a collective in the Astrakhan area, his family made visits to Astrakhans who were members of the same yasn as he and his father. Their first contact with these yasn mates was after they moved into the Astrakhan area, having left their homes near the Don during the Revolution. These yasn mates were then recognized as relations and included in the sphere of relationship of this family. Both young and old continued to participate even though the Communist Party was said to ridicule this. As one informant describing Tsagan during the Soviet period put it, 'people still did the same ceremony, the traditional tsagālxa, giving presents in exchange, visiting still to this time like before, like always but not the large sizes but small things, but everything was done like before.'

In the minds of informants today, the key word in Tsagan Sar and in Kalmyk social relationships in general is respect or kündelegen. They see respect as being shown to the older, senior generation by the junior generation making the first visit, by the bringing of important items and by the formal presentation — the tsagālxa. They see respect being returned by the senior in the gift presented to the junior visitor. If one fails to make the necessary visits, he is said to lack respect. This has been shown to be of particular importance

in the case of those close in age where the visits are sometimes made even after Tsagan in order to show respect. Thus, once again, the importance of showing respect in the maintenance of social relations is demonstrated.

In some instances, social pressure may be applied when visits are not reciprocated. Prior to Tsagan, an informant (Household G, Appendix A) advised the author that she had told everyone that she was not going to exchange gifts or visits. However, as the materials reveal, the family participated as fully as before and, interestingly, a series of visits were made in Philadelphia several weeks after Tsagan was over, at which time quart bottles of vodka were brought to erase any possible slight. These visits were made in order to avert the possible disruption of important social relationships.

In fact, the author was present on a trip which the informant and her husband made to Philadelphia during the latter part of the month of Tsagan Sar to visit a sick relative. In Philadelphia, they stopped at one of their other 'close relations' who knew the real purpose of their visit, and they brought vodka in an attempt to pass it off as a Tsagan visit. The relative being visited prepared food as is usual when a visitor comes to the house. When the informant and her husband tried to perform the tsagālxa, she refused and indicated that she was angry because she had expected the family to visit during the three previous weekends. As the informant left, her husband was given a shirt but she was given an old kerchief by the relative who said, 'I have a crystal vase and ash trays for you as a present but I will not give it to you because you did not show respect.' When the informant and her husband finally made their Tsagan visits in Philadelphia, a formal visit was made to this relative which apparently sufficed to prevent a break.

A further feature of the celebration of Tsagan Sar is the annual ball which has been held on a more or less regular basis since the first celebration in 1946 in the displaced persons camp. The ball is sponsored by the Society for the Promotion of Kalmyk Culture or by one of the three societies which support the religious establishments. The occasion is also used to raise funds for various purposes. The ball is attended by the younger and middle-aged Kalmyks. It brings together on an informal basis almost all people in this age range and provides an occasion for socializing and merry-making in keeping with the feelings of the season.

A formal program of entertainment is presented by teenagers and young adults consisting of Kalmyk songs and dances. Sometimes, a few numbers by Yugoslavian and Bulgarian artists are included in remembrance of their sojourn in those countries. These Yugoslavian

and Bulgarian songs are now familiar to and enjoyed by almost all Kalmyks regardless of whether they had firsthand contact with either culture. They have become part of the body of what is now Kalmyk culture. In fact, all Kalmyks participate in the Yugoslavian circle dance, the Kolo, which is performed at every large function. Social dancing, including Russian variations of such Western social dances as the tango are performed by mature adults, and the full range of American dance styles are performed by the teenagers and young adults as part of the festivities.

This ball may be seen as a further reiteration in an informal way of the renewal aspect of Tsagan Sar. It is a new feature and, in one sense, represents the coming together of the remnant group as a whole in America and an informal renewal of social relationships across this entire group. It is a capping of the Tsagan celebration; for as the individual household annually renews its own social sphere with its cycle of visits, so the group as a whole renews relationships with the ball.

## NOTES

1. Such a description was elicited by the author from Mr. John Hangin, a Chahar Mongol now residing in the United States.

2. This absence in the early reports of the important secular aspects can be attributed to 1) the restricted view of the observers who did not note these features which were just as important then as they are today; 2) the relative unimportance of these aspects in the context of the celebration; 3) the non-existence of these aspects. We cannot determine from internal evidence which of these suppositions is correct, but we must note that traces of these secular aspects were recorded.

3. The temple in those early days was frequently an elaborately decorated tent.

4. There is no indication whether Pallas' account is first-hand.

5. In an account of a Tsagan celebration in his youth, Oulanoff records that 'in that distant time when among Kalmyks there was a Khan, princes visited him on the first day of visits, this is vividly recorded in the Kalmyk epoch Djungar. But in the not too distant past on the first day of the festival, atmen and older seniors in the stanitsa and also bakshas (superiors of Kalmyk Buddhist monasteries) with their senior priests and novices all proceed with their visits to their higher head, the Lama, coming from as far away as twenty-five to ninety versts' (1959:4).

6. Since the celebration continues for a whole month, those food items prepared before the beginning of the celebration are soon depleted and new supplies of cookies, vodka and food are purchased and prepared several times during the course of the month. Many of these items are used to feed visitors to one's home and are also taken along when one makes his necessary visits.

7. Variations in the temple ritual which mark the beginning of the celebration exist between the Astrakhan and Don Kalmyks. The author made an attempt to witness the ritual at both the Astrakhan and the Don Temples in New Jersey which was possible since there was a slight difference in the time of beginning and ending in each temple. These observations were supplemented with informant data. The major differences in Don Kalmyk ritual will be indicated at the end of the description of the Astrakhan ritual.

8. Pallas' and Bergmann's descriptions of the musical performance and the instruments themselves during the Tsagan celebration corroborate the author's own observations.

9. In keeping with the voluntary nature of temple attendance, some who come to the evening ritual do not return the following morning; while others who have not attended in the evening, do attend in the morning.

10. The following is the general form of the visit as witnessed by the author, using the first visit made after the end of the household feast as the example.

11. According to one informant, it was formerly the custom to bring butter to all one visited on all occasions and place it on the hearth, but analyses of the present Tsagan cycles indicates that it is brought by most only to 'close relatives.'

12. Some older men maintain reputations for their ability to turn an apt phrase for these formal toasts.

13. The same limited range of foods was served at almost all of the houses visited by the author, a further indication of the narrow range of Kalmyk cuisine.

14. Various methods were employed by some women to avoid drinking the vodka, such as drinking a glass of water immediately afterward and surreptitiously spitting the vodka back into the glass. These are looked upon as breaches of respect, courtesy and etiquette.

15. This brings to mind Zhitetski's remark that among Astrakhan Kalmyks, the Tsagan Sar celebration normally lasted a week (1893:42).

16. This stricture is still followed today even by young adults.

17. The author resided with Household E2 (Appendix B) and participated in every visit they made and was present at all visits made to their house. The records of the other cycles collected were kept by individuals in the various families and were discussed in detail with the author. Since the group was small, a particular visit might be recorded in two cycles, the visitor and the one being visited, which acted as a sort of check. The twelve cycles collected encompassed some sixty or more different family groups or households.

18. The term household will be used to denote the unit within a single residence which makes and receives visits as a single unit. Within this unit there may be one nuclear family (which is synonymous with the unit) or more than one nucleaf family or remnants thereof. The term family will be reserved for each nuclear family.

## CHAPTER VI

### MARRIAGE

#### Introduction

Marriage, with its rites and ceremonies, provides a second but non-cyclical focal point for the intensification of social interaction among the Kalmyks in America today. It involves a complex series of formal visits and gift exchanges extending over a period of time and leading up to the marriage rite and beyond. It provides a continuing focus of activity not only for the two families directly involved but also for close and distant relations, and certain of its events may involve practically the entire Kalmyk group.

The data which will be presented will show the historical depth and continuity of many of the aspects of this institutional complex as well as its continuing and central importance in Kalmyk life. The account of the rites and ceremonies that are involved in marriage today will also provide examples of the way in which changes and accommodations have been made, particularly in the realm of material objects — new items being equated with and replacing old ones and new content being injected into the traditional patterns which maintain their continuity.

#### Historical Background

Accounts of the Kalmyks from their earliest period to the recent past contain a great deal of information regarding the marriage institution. Even the small fragments of the ancient Tsaadjin Bichik, which has come down to us from the period of the first Oirat federation in the 15th century contains, of its eight provisions, four provisions relating to the fines to be exacted when adultery was committed with the wife of a prince, with an ordinary man's wife, with a female slave and with the concubine of a priest (Riasanovsky 1929: 70). Much more specific information concerning the institution of marriage is contained in the Mongol-Oirat Regulations of 1640. This was the product of the revitalized Oirat federation and remained in force among the Kalmyks until 1822 when it was supplanted by a

revised digest of law. The regulations concerning marriage as well as other parts of the code relating to the family reveal the degree of penetration of the state political structure into the life of the people.<sup>1</sup>

The portions of the code concerning marriage fell into several categories. One series of regulations prescribed the payment, including the number and kind of item, which the groom's family was to make to the bride's family, and the dowry, specifying the number and kind of item, which the bride's family was to provide for her to take to her husband. These payments varied in relation to the rank or social status of the individuals concerned.

For example, if a marriage was arranged between the son and daughter of one of the highest ranked princes, the father of the groom had to pay to the bride's father 30 'valuable things', 100 horses and 400 sheep. The dowry in such a marriage was proportionate (Leontovich 1870:88). For lesser princes, the payment for a bride was 10 'valuable things', 50 horses and 100 sheep. For the daughter of the head of forty kibitkas, the payment consisted of 5 camels, 25 horses, 25 cows and 40 sheep, and her dowry had to consist of 5 pieces of material for dresses, 20 'belongings' (household items), a saddle and clothing and new material, 2 camels and 2 riding horses. If the dowry included a male or female servant, then the groom had to return one of the camels (Leontovich 1879:89, Riasanovsky 1929:82). The payment for the daughter of the tribute collector of twenty kibitkas, was equated, according to Pallas, with that of the common zaisang but according to Riasanovski, the payment was equated with that of the shulunga; it consisted of 4 camels, 20 horses, 20 cows and 30 sheep. The dowry in this case consisted of material for five dresses, a horse, a camel and 50 items of household equipment (according to the Pallas version, 200 items of 'household equipment of reasonable composition') (Leontovich 1879:89).

The two ranks below this denoted the laity (none of the sources of the code give the native referent or the basis for this distinction). The upper-ranked commoner received as payment for his daughter 15 horses and 15 cows, 3 camels and 20 sheep, and her dowry consisted of 1 horse, 1 camel, 4 pieces of dress material and 10 household articles (Riasanovsky records 10 pieces of dress material and 4 sewn dresses. Pallas records 8 pieces of dress material, 4 sewn dresses and household equipment according to ability (Riasanovsky 1929:82, Leontovich 1879:82). The lowest ranked individual received for his daughter 2 camels, 12 horses, 10 cows, and 50 sheep, and had to give for a dowry 2 dresses, a horse with a horse, clothing and some household goods. (Riasanovsky records a horse, a camel, a fur coat, a sleeveless jacket and a saddle and a bridle (1929:82).



Still another provision set the minimum age for marriage at fourteen years. Before that, a girl might only become engaged. If her father gave her in marriage before she reached the minimum age, then she was to be taken from this husband and bestowed upon another 'free of charge' (Leontovich 1879:90, Pallas 1776 I:201).

The Code further stipulated that at the time of marriage, the father of the groom was obliged to send to the bride's father specified amounts of slaughtered animals, the amount varying with rank. The head of forty kibitkas had to send 4 horses, 4 cows and 4 sheep; the head of twenty kibitkas had to send 3 horses, 3 cows and 4 sheep. The upper-class commoner had to send 1 horse, 1 cow and 3 sheep; and the lowest class commoner had to send a horse or cow and 2 sheep (Leontovich 1879:90, Pallas 1776 I:201).

One of the provisions, frequently cited to show the existence of an exogamic unit, stated that within the unit of forty families (kibitkas), four single men had to marry yearly. Ten families were to help pay for each of the brides for these four men. Those who contributed a horse or a cow received in addition to the usual single dress material, another small item. If any of the ten families of the group to which a groom belonged did not contribute, it was fined. (Leontovich 1879:90, Pallas 1776 I:200). It must be noted that the wording of the code does not indicate whether or not these marriages were to be made outside of the group of forty, nor does it convey any impression that the unity of forty was a kin unit.

The Code's concern with a whole range of possible circumstances is shown by the following examples. If a girl who was formally engaged reached the age of twenty and the groom had not yet come to fetch her, the matchmaker went to the boy's family three times to offer the girl. If she was not then taken, the girl's father informed the prince who gave her to another man, her father being permitted to keep the portion of the bridal payment that had already been paid. If the father did not inform the prince before giving his daughter to another, then he had to return the payment to the first fiancé and pay a fine of nine times nine animals (Leontovich 1879:92, Pallas 1776 I:92). If the girl died after the betrothal feast but before the marriage while she was still at her father's house, the dowry was given to the groom. If she died before the feast had taken place but after the ceremony, then the leaders of both sides equally divided that part of the payment for the bride which had already been given to the bride's father. (Leontovich 1879:93).

The parents of the girl were obliged to maintain her virginity until her marriage. If she became pregnant before marriage and the father was not her fiancé, then her parents had to give her

fiance one animal. If the father of the child was her fiance, then he had to pay a small fine to her parents (Leontovich 1879:95).

The foster parents of a girl were responsible for her betrothal, but the payment for the bride and the dowry were shared by her natural and foster parents. If her natural parents wished to take her back and she was between nine and fifteen years of age, they had to pay a compensation of nine animals to her foster parents. If she was 'badly brought up', the compensation was reduced by half. After age fifteen she could no longer be redeemed (Leontovich 1879:95).

A man who eloped with or kidnapped an unbetrothed girl was fined, the amount depending on his rank — i. e., the higher his rank, the greater the fine (Leontovich 1879:95).

The earliest substantive details which we have concerning the institution of marriage and the series of rites, ceremonies and exchanges of goods leading up to and occurring at the time of the marriage, are provided by Pallas in his report on Kalmyk life in the latter half of the eighteenth century (1776 I:235-241).

When a youth finally decided to enter into marriage, a match-maker was sent to the parents of the girl of his choice to inquire about the possibilities of arranging a match. The prospective bride had either been selected by the boy himself, by a friend or by his parents.<sup>2</sup> Such a proposal might be refused if the girl was too young, if the dowry was considered too small or if the families were shown to be related within four or five degrees of relationship which were considered to be too close to permit a match.

If the bride's parents desired 'to make a deal', they indicated their desire to confer with the boy's parents (Pallas 1776 II:236). The latter arranged a banquet according to their means to which the parents and some relatives of the girl were invited. After the feast, the girl's parents and relatives received horses or other animals from the boy's parents. At this time, both parties came to an agreement concerning the arrangements for the wedding, particularly the numerous gifts which the parents of the groom were to present to the parents of the bride. The bride's dowry, which was presented to the groom's family, made the burden of these gifts somewhat lighter. The dowry, as the Mongol-Oirat Code shows, consisted of animals in addition to a tent, household equipment, materials for dresses, and clothing for the bride. Only in cases of extreme poverty on the part of the bride's parents were the tent and the household equipment absent from the dowry. The quality and extent of this household equipment depended on the 'good will of the bride's parents' (Pallas 1776 II:236).

Several days after this feast, the boy's parents sent two or more slaughtered sheep to the girl's family and sometimes horses and oxen, a supply of ärki (ärkə), liquor distilled from milk — the amounts depending on the wealth of the family — and some gifts especially for the bride's parents. In addition, as a pledge of the betrothal, the hind leg of the sheep (šagai) (Šayā Tšimgn) had to be sent. The girl's parents accepted these things and the betrothal was then considered formally settled. Thereafter, neither the girl nor the boy could enter into marriage with another. A feast was held at the camp of the bride's parents and was attended by the parents and relatives of the girl and the boy. The importance of the sheep's thigh as a symbol of the settlement of the betrothal was reflected in the name of this feast which was called 'šagaitau' (Pallas 1776 II:236).

Priestly astrologers were consulted for a determination of the proper date for the marriage ceremony and the prayers that were necessary for the prevention of unforeseen circumstances if the horoscopes of the young couple were not exactly matched. Such consultations had to be made on days other than the eighth, sixteenth or twenty-fourth of the month, for such days were deemed unlucky for this type of consultation. If the couple's horoscopes were not compatible, then no favorable marriage could take place unless counter-measures in the form of rites and prayers were performed by the priests. Sometimes a marriage was delayed months or even years while these rites were performed.

The bride's parents received the previously stipulated gifts from the parents of the groom and in return gave the items for the bride's dowry. Pallas, in his description of the marriage, does not make any direct reference to the dowries stipulated by the Mongol-Oirat regulations (which he reports in a separate section) or whether or not the regulations were in force at the time of his visit. His statements about the negotiations concerning amount of dowry and groom's gifts (see above) seem to indicate that they were no longer strictly adhered to. He merely notes that the dowry consisted of household goods, primarily linens and pillows and clothing for the bride. The tent was also included but its cost was said to be covered by the groom.

Pallas records two alternative locations for the ceremonies and rites which occurred on the wedding day. In some cases, the bride's parents took the couple's new felt tent to the aimak of the groom. The bride followed on horseback accompanied by her relatives and friends. Two men rode on each side of her holding a silk or cotton veil over her head. She remained seated on the horse until the tent (in which

she was to remain until the wedding) was pitched and the household gear arranged in proper order. Pallas, however, observes that customarily the groom and his friends brought the felt tent to the aimak of the bride. On the wedding day, it was set up somewhat outside the range of the camp, following which the marriage rites and ceremonies took place.<sup>3</sup>

The bride's parents served a meal in their tent, using stores of meat, pastries and beverages accumulated especially for the occasion. The groom, his friends and the priests waited in another tent nearby until the time for the wedding ceremony. Before the commencement of the ceremony, a priest entered the tent which was to be used by the newlyweds and burned incense and began to read the prescribed prayer of consecration.

At the astrologically designated hour, the bride and groom knelt facing toward the east on a decorative felt blanket just outside the threshold of their tent. The bride and groom linked elbows. The priest, standing just inside the door, asked them whether they were voluntarily entering into the marriage. He cautioned the groom to maintain a tolerant attitude and the bride to be obedient. A bowl with meat broth and pieces of meat from the sheep's scapula was set down before them. The scapula and leg bone of the sheep were given to the couple to hold in their right hands, the groom holding the lower part of the bone and the bride the part somewhat higher, while the upper most part remained free. If the bride showed modesty at this point and did not want to touch the bone, someone from behind pressed her hand to it. The priest repeated several prayers. Two young men who had been selected on the basis of their astrological compatibility with the couple moved toward them. They pressed the heads of the bride and groom to the earth three times saying loudly, 'Venerate the sun, venerate the sheep's shin bone, venerate butter' (Pallas 1776 II:238).<sup>4</sup> This signified the validation of the marriage.

After the ceremony, the party of young people moved into another tent — that of the bride's parents — where other guests had been feasting. The priest repeated a final blessing and passed around the bowl of meat which was used in the ceremony, each person taking a bit. This feast was known as the xürim (xüřm). After this was over, the bride's parents and relatives were obliged to give her to the groom. She was guarded at this point by a group of young maidens and had to be 'seized'. A number of young wives were delegated to accomplish this task. The young maidens, with the bride adding her screams and wails, put up a spirited defense and a virtual mock war ensued. It always had to finish with the wives as victors.

When the maidens finally evacuated the 'battlefield', the bride was taken by the young wives and her hair was loosened from its single plait and tied into two plaits which was the customary style for a married woman. They dressed her in clothing befitting her new status. Another ceremony was then performed. Two strong men held the skin of a freshly slaughtered sheep which had been stretched at the head and tail. The bride sat on the skin while the men moved it up and down; this 'admitted the bride into the wifely order' (Pallas 1776 II:240).

In the evening, the felt tent of the newlyweds was dismantled, reerected a few hundred paces away and the gear and equipment reassembled in proper order. The bride, weeping and struggling, was led by the groom to the new tent. The two young men who previously acted as escorts during the ceremony closed the tent, leaving the couple by themselves. The guests continued with their feasting, drinking and merrymaking. Customarily, the couple remained near the bride's parents for several days so that the bride might become accustomed to being separated from her family. The couple had to remain inside their tent for three days. Then the bride traveled to the groom's camp, escorted by some of her relatives. The bride was not permitted to enter her parents' tent during the first six months following her marriage but they frequently visited and comforted her.

Pallas records that the Kalmyks were usually monogamous, though the rich and the noble might take a second wife if the first was barren. He also notes instances of the nobility taking more than two wives, but this occurred 'only through the indulgence of the priests and was really to provide for succession' (Pallas 1776 II:240). He states that according to an old custom, a young wife was required to stand bowed and ashamed before her husband's father. At the time of Pallas' writing, this custom was said to be on the wane, but it was still considered improper for a young wife to speak to her father-in-law or to sit in his presence (1776 II:241).

Pallas observes that divorce was infrequent. If the divorced woman bore a son who subsequently died, the ex-husband did not have to return her dowry but merely gave the woman a horse and her regular clothing. If she bore a daughter, she could demand the return of her dowry. The daughter remained with the father and the mother returned to her parents.

Bergmann, writing some twenty-five years later, adds to our knowledge of the marriage rite in this early period as well as showing us some variation, an indication either of change or of inter-tribal variation (1804:145-151). He notes that marriage among the

Kalmyks rested upon a strong desire to have children and that no marriage would be contracted if such a desire could not be fulfilled. Marriage between individuals of differing status could not be contracted. Thus, the sons of princes had to go to another tribe to seek a bride. The Torgūt would go to the Dörbet and the Dörbet would go to the Torgūt to obtain brides. Bergmann notes that the common people were much more strict in prohibiting marriages among relatives than were persons of high rank. The latter sometimes married their sisters-in-law, but the former forbade an alliance in which the principals were less than three or four degrees removed from one another. He repeats the proverb which he attributes to commoners, that 'princes and dogs do not know how to recognize relatives' (Bergmann 1804 III:146).

Bergmann's description of matchmaking and the ceremonies leading up to the wedding are, on the whole, in accord with the description presented by Pallas.<sup>5</sup> His record of the ceremony which takes place on the wedding day also duplicates that of Pallas though he fixes the location of the wedding ceremony at the camp of the bride's family, with no alternative listed.<sup>6</sup> He does affirm Pallas in his indication that the wife must avoid her parent's tent during the first few months or, indeed, during the first or second year if her husband delays it. Princely parents, in order to avoid this prohibition, moved to another tent when they wished to converse with their daughter (Bergmann 1804 III:151).

Bergmann described the formal ceremony marking the first visit of a daughter to her parents' home following her marriage; for 'the marriage will not be happy among the Kalmyks if this custom has not been observed' (1825:214). On her return, the daughter knelt at the door while her parents remained inside. Her parents then came to the door and embraced her. They could then receive her in their home. This was the occasion for a great feast, the father presented his daughter with gifts which might consist of several hundred horses or animals or meat or money. Bergmann notes that the daughter of the prince might at this time receive a small portion of his domain and its subjects.

In 1822, a congress of Kalmyk princes, lamas, lesser nobles and lower ranking priests was held at Zinzili at which time the old Code of 1640 was amended to make it more suitable to the times. Several revisions were made regarding the provisions pertaining to marriage. The new regulations no longer fixed the payments for brides or for the dowry of various ranks. The marriage age was still set at fifteen with fines for the man who took a younger wife. Parents were now required to ask their daughter for her consent to the marriage and if they did not, they were fined (Leontovich 1880:93).

Somewhat later, Nefed'ev, in his description of Kalmyk life in the 1830's, records the same basic procedures involved in match-making and marriage (1834:192-198). According to this description, on the day selected by the priest-astrologer for the wedding, the groom sets off to get his bride. No rites or ceremonies are described as taking place in the bride's xoton. The groom and his retinue did not set up the new tent near the home of the bride. Rather, the bride was taken from her home after a mock battle between her friends and relatives and the groom's party. The bride, after being seized from her defenders, was immediately seated on a horse with the groom and, with his retinue, quickly galloped off toward his camp. When they arrived, the wedding ceremony with the shin bone of the sheep was performed before the door of the groom's parents' tent. The bride was then taken into her new tent and her hair was braided into two plaits.

Nefed'ev notes that the religious and secular rites were observed only when a groom and his bride were married for the first time. Subsequent marriages were simply confirmed by mutual consent. He indicates that marriage by abduction might occur if the bride's father refused the offer of a fiancé or if the financial demands made for a bride were too large.

A detailed ethnography by Nebol'sin published in 1852 gives one of the most complete and colorful pictures of matchmaking and marriage customs among the Kalmyks of that time. It is based upon his observations among the Kalmyks of the Xoşūd Ulus. In most details, Nebol'sin's description is in accord with the earlier accounts (see Appendix D for the details of his account). A very brief general description by Pisemskii, in 1860, concurs with the earlier accounts. However, he notes that there were two methods by which one could marry — by abduction of the bride or by the formal ceremonial procedures (Pisemskii 1860:25).

In 1863, Krasnov provided the earliest account specifically concerned with the marriage customs of the Kalmyks living in the Don region. This very brief and general account is in keeping with the earlier descriptions, indicating no major variation of custom at that time among the Don Kalmyk group. He does note, however, that 'for the bride's dowry, the father of the groom must, by agreement, pay some sum of money.' (Krasnov 1863:242).

Zhitetski, writing in the 1890's about the Astrakhan Kalmyks, also provides a very complete description of marriage practices among the Kalmyks of that area (1893:19-26).<sup>7</sup> At the commencement of his description, he notes that 'weddings constitute the responsibility and work of parents, the marrying children have

passive roles' (Zhitetski 1893:19). His observations of the finding of a bride, the qualities desired and the matchmaking procedure indicate the continued maintenance of prior customs.

At the time of his observations, the minimum age for marriage for a girl was fifteen, which shows the continuity of this custom from the time of the Mongol Oirat Regulations of 1640. He notes that in selecting a spouse, it is important only to consider the relationships through the male line for 'relatives through the female line do not have any obligatory value and one can marry two brothers to two sisters but in the male line marriage is not possible to one's own relatives of remote degree, although the system does not delimit the degree in which marriage was possible' (Zhitetski 1893:19). In a footnote, he notes that a priest in the temple of the Erketenski Ulus observed that one could not marry within ten degrees of removal. However, a priest in Baga Dörbet Temple had noted that one could not marry within forty-nine degrees of removal, but more correctly that by reckoning male relationship, marriage was impossible until 'oblivion obliterated relationships' (Zhitetski 1893:19). He cites a case to support the reasoning of these priests. The zaisang of Yandikovski Ulus recounted that a Kalmyk from Keret (Kered) rod (kin unit) of Yandikovski Ulus in 1880 wished to marry his son to a girl in Keret rod (kin unit) of Erketenski Ulus but the parents of the bride did not consent because they said that they were 'close' relatives and had formed one rod (kin unit) before the exodus of the Kalmyk group in 1771.

Zhitetski details both the Dörbet and Torgūt variants of the marriage ritual. He indicates that they 'do not quite concur [for] among the Dörbet all marriage processes were accompanied by much drinking' (Zhitetski 1893:19). His descriptions are again, in broad outline, in accord with those of previous investigators.

He observes that in matchmaking procedures among the Dörbet, each successive visit was marked by the bringing of successively larger numbers of skins of ārki (home brewed vodka distilled from milk). The visits were referred to in those terms. Thus, the first visit was termed nigen bortkha (negn bortxă) or nigen saba (negn sawă) (one skin or one container); the second visit, hoir bortkha (xojr börtxa) or hoir saba (xđir sawa) and so forth. The Torgūt did not follow this practice but merely brought small token gifts such as tea, cookies, and nutmeg. The visit which sealed the betrothal was the same for both groups. It involved the bringing of the tea and the kerchief with the glue and silver money (the betrothal gifts recorded by Nebol'sin).



In both groups, after the formal betrothal a visit was made by the groom called the kurgen uzonkren (kürgn üzütxa) or the 'looking over by the groom'. On this visit, in addition to food, the Dörbet took along gifts of clothing and money for the bride as well as gifts for her family previously stipulated at the time of the arrangement. The Torgūt only brought gifts of food. For the Torgūt, the next visit to the bride by a group of the groom's family involve the bringing of items for the new tent and materials from which curtains were to be made. At this time, the 'cutting out' and sewing took place in which both sides participated.

A week before the wedding date, the Torgūt made another visit, called the khörim oğal'gan (xür'm öglğa n), at which time the groom and his delegation brought slaughtered animals, vodka, tea, cakes and also saddle horses as gifts for the relatives of the bride. In return, the bride's father presented the parents of the groom, the groom himself and the members of their party with items of clothing which they put on. On this visit, final arrangements were made for the taking of the bride. Among the Dörbet, these two visits — the 'cutting out' and the khörim oğal'gan — were combined into one visit.

The procedures involved in the 'taking of the bride' are the same for both groups. No religious ceremony is described as taking place at the bride's xoton (nomadic camp); only the ceremony involved in the mock seizure of the bride. The bride and her dowry of household items, her clothing and gifts for the relatives of the groom, including trousers for his mother, were carried off to the xoton of the groom. Zhitetski indicates that the rites performed at the xoton of the groom were the same for both groups and are in accord with the description of Nebol'sin, including the gal tjalg'n ceremony and the bride's paying respect to the household shrine, to the parents and lastly to the patrilineal relatives of the groom. A religious rite was performed in the groom's parents' kibitka and then the bride's hair was replaited and she was dressed in womanly attire.

Zhitetski's account brings us to what might be considered the ethnographic present. It describes the period just prior to that covered by the recollections of our informants. Two accounts were obtained from Astrakhan informants of the traditions and procedures in that area in the early 1900's through the early 30's to the time of the 'hungry days' and attempted collectivization. Both accounts are generally in line with Zhitetski's description of Dörbet and Torgūt procedures, although by this time they had been consolidated to a great degree, with the result that the exchange of gifts by both sides did not take place on a separate visit but occurred on the day of the

wedding itself. The items brought by the boy's side were brought on the day of the taking of the bride, rather than on a separate visit, all the items being checked before the boy's party could enter.

One of these informants, in describing the marriage of his father's brother's daughter, notes that it was necessary for the girl to visit each of her relatives before her marriage in order to say goodbye. She would be accompanied by her mother and by some of her female relatives. She brought vodka for the adults and gifts for the children. She would tell them that she was getting married and that she had come to say goodbye. It was usual for the relative being visited to indicate that he would give her some kind of gift which would be sent to her house before the wedding. The informant noted that she would only visit relatives in her district, usually paternal — her naxtsa (mother's brother) who usually lived some place else would not be visited but rather at a certain time he would come to her parents' home and bring his gift. The night before the wedding day, a party was usually held at the girl's home at which all her relatives were present. The preparations were handled by close relatives.

Two post-Revolutionary literary sources also provide some general data on marriage practices. Borisov and Mol'kov note the practice of junior levirate, such rights being acquired by the family because of the considerable material expenditures of matchmaking (Borisov 1926:24; Mol'kov 1928:290-91). Borisov observes that matchmaking was begun when the daughter was very young and 'parents arrange the marriage before their own appearance', i. e. when the baby is in the womb of the mother.<sup>8</sup> 'Marriage was prohibited between relatives. [though] marriage to a girl from mother's rod is considered a sign of insuring full happiness to the end of life' (1926:25). Mol'kov also notes that 'kinship through mother's line is not counted as an obstacle to marriage', while 'relationship through father's line makes marriage inadmissible even if remote' (1928:290). He indicates that in marriage, the bride passes into someone else's rod and no longer belongs to her natal rod. Thus, after her husband's death, she goes to his younger brothers or other relatives (Mol'kov 1928:291).

Actual abduction (as differentiated from mock abduction) of brides at the wedding ceremony still took place. A special order was issued at that time by the President of the Kalmyk Soviet Socialist Republic to end this situation by positive measures, if necessary — indicating that it was still being practiced, though illegally, in the 1920's (Mol'kov 1928:291). Marriage rites practiced by the old emigrés

during their sojourn in Eastern Europe were described as being basically the same as today, though reduced financial means did not permit more than token amounts of the various items and gifts. This was also said to have been the case for weddings occurring during the period of residence in the displaced persons camps.

The historical material concerned with marriage customs provides a plethora of detail on the various procedures involved in the sequence of rites. Though there are some changes in sequence and location of events and variation in the kinds and amounts of items involved in the series of exchanges, in general the basic patterns and features continue to be maintained throughout the entire period. Although there is little or no data on the relationships or kin status of the personnel involved — beyond the distinction between the bride's side and the groom's side and the assignment of certain duties to 'close relatives' — the description of the marriage procedures makes clear the continuity of the Kalmyk conceptualizations which symbolized the incorporation of women into their husband's kin group after marriage as well as the establishment of relations between kin groups as a result of marriage.

#### Marriage Rites Today

Our examination of marriage rites today will show the continuity of basic patterns from earlier times until the present. The changes that have taken place have, in the main, continued to be in the realm of material items. In addition, as an adjustment in a sense to the gross changes which have taken place in some other realms of Kalmyk life, there has been a simplification in and a telescoping of some of the rites involved. This constitutes an accommodation to the changed circumstances in which the Kalmyks find themselves today, made to perpetuate the essentials in this institutional complex.

The average marriage age for women today is twenty and for men it is twenty-two. The Kalmyk group in the United States remains primarily endogamous though there have been a number of marriages with non-Kalmyks. Several of these marriages, between Kalmyk men and Slavic or German women, occurred right after the war while the Kalmyks were in displaced persons camps.<sup>9</sup> In general, these couples and their children are integrated into the group, and in a number of cases, the wives have converted to Buddhism. Several non-Kalmyk marriages have taken place in the United States, preponderately involving Kalmyk men. Non-Kalmyk marriage mates in the United States have ranged in ethnic affiliation from Puerto Rican and Tatar to Tibetan and American.<sup>10</sup> The integration of

these couples varies. Generally, if the non-Kalmyk mate is female, there is a maintenance of ties and continued participation of the family in Kalmyk group activities.<sup>11</sup> If the non-Kalmyk mate is male, ties are more tenuous. This is in a sense understandable in this traditionally patrilineally oriented group. Young adults now reaching maturity do think about and discuss out-marriage as a possibility. However, as one young informant noted, 'they still would not want to marry a non-Kalmyk for there is something not right about it'.

Another recent change is the dating of Kalmyk boys and girls as a couple and in groups with parental permission. It is felt that 'the boy should make himself better known to the girl' before a proposal of marriage is seriously considered. The various group-wide celebrations and balls provide further occasions for boys and girls to meet, dance and spend time together. These groups of boys and girls are in a sense successors to the children's play groups. Though this type of social contact between adolescents is still primarily within the group, there is the interaction with non-Kalmyks within the school milieu which sometimes moves onto the social plane. For example, the school principal in Freehold interviewed by the author noted that in social dancing, Kalmyk girls danced at first only with their brothers; in time, however, those 'more Americanized' began to dance with the other boys in the class. While this has not as yet led to sustained out-of-school contact, what the future holds is an open question. This type of social contact is characteristic for young adults in their employment milieu. Particularly in Philadelphia, young Kalmyk women have formed friendships with American girls in the context of their work and one may see these American friends being invited to the girl's wedding. The same holds true for the young men.

However, the tradition of arranged marriage is still continued today in many instances. But the couple is now consulted and if they are not agreeable to the match, negotiations are terminated. According to an older Don Kalmyk informant married in Bulgaria, consultation was formerly not necessary.

One or two informants who were married in America stated that in their cases the marriage was not arranged. They decided to be married, and their parents, who had no objection to the match, observed the formalities and ritual of the acceptance of the proposal. If such a marriage is opposed by the parents, the couple may utilize a traditionally recognized alternative — that of running away, the boy 'stealing the girl' from her parents' home. However, such a marriage is subsequently recognized through ritual procedure.

Romantic attachment does not appear to be a consideration in the choice of a mate in most Kalmyk marriages. Even in the few instances where the couples were said to have decided beforehand that they wished to be married, the expression of their relationship does not seem to be couched in terms familiar to American concepts of romantic conjugal love, but rather in terms of destiny bringing the couple together. In only one instance, where a couple ran off, was the word 'love match' used by one of the spouses to characterize the union. Even so, their behavior and attitude in public toward one another was somewhat impersonal.

The girl's parents thoroughly consider all proposals of marriage. Proposals from several families may be received before one is accepted. Many factors appear to be taken into consideration. One informant, whose marriage took place during the author's fieldwork and was recorded in detail, stated that her father was first approached by a family which included eight young children in addition to the prospective husband. The proposal was refused because it was felt that she would be a slave in the house of such a family. The prospects of the young man as a wage-earner are also considered. In another instance, a young Astrakhan was refused by the informant's father, a Buzāva and an 'old emigré', because it was felt that Astrakhan and new emigré Buzāva were harsher to their wives than other Buzāva.

Opposition to a marriage is frequently based on the fact that the couple are considered to be too close in terms of kinship distance. In one instance known to the author, the boy's former stepmother was now the girl's mother's brother's wife, and in another case, the couple had a stepgrandfather in common. In both of these situations, the kin distance was considered too close for marriage. Nevertheless, after the bride was 'abducted', the marriage was accepted.

Thus, kin relationship is an additional factor to be taken into consideration in the selection of a spouse. Informants vary in their reckoning of the exogamic limit, reflecting the variation in the data from earlier periods. One mode of reckoning prohibits marriage between individuals related patrilineally within seven generations or less. An alternative mode of reckoning sets the exogamic limit at the boundary of the kin unit, referred to as the *yasn* or bone. Operatively, this unit, which is now a *sib*, includes individuals bearing the same yasn name patrilineally inherited (see Chapter VII). However, there have been instances of marriage between individuals of the same yasn in America and in Russia before the Revolution between individuals of the same yasn who came from different aimaks

where the kin distance was felt to be great enough to permit marriage. One informant reported that previously one could not marry within the yasn, but that now the required degrees of distance of removal in the patrilineal line have been reduced to the fifth degree or beyond. She could not, however, cite an example of a marriage of such close degree.

Cognatic kin distance is also considered in selecting a spouse. Thus, one is not permitted to marry persons in the category of mother's sister's children (böl) or mother's sister's children's children (bölencer), but one can marry the children of the latter (third böl). A boy may not marry his father's sister's daughter (zē kukn) in the first, second or third degree. He may marry fourth degree zē kukn, though formerly the prohibition was said to have extended to the fourth degree. An informant stated that several years ago a boy married his third zē kukn, and many felt that the relationship was too close for marriage. A boy may marry into the category of mother's brother's daughter — three degrees of removal or greater. These exogamic limits for cognatic kin coincide with the limits of the extension of the elgn sadn (a kin unit) which will be discussed in Chapter VII. Thus, the elgn sadn is, in effect, an exogamic unit. The tendency toward some change in the exogamic limit in terms of the inclusion of fewer degrees of distance may be explained by the limited population of the present Kalmyk social unit and the desire to maintain Kalmyk endogamy.

Informants recollect a preference for marriage with an individual in the category of mother's brother's daughter — but an individual who is at least three degrees removed. Such a marriage is said to bring a good life. However, genealogical and other data do not reveal such a preference as being operative either presently or in the recent past.

The young man's family always initiates the proposal of marriage. When a suitable bride is selected, her family is approached to determine whether a proposal would be considered. This is usually done by some close male relative of the young man. In one case, the husband of the boy's half sister told the author, 'I told the family to come here for the bride'. This individual later took a prominent part in all of the marriage arrangements, acting as the ax'lāchē (axalātši) or leader of the groom's side in all of the subsequent ceremonies.

A visit referred to as the ärkř zenga, the sounding out with vodka, is made at which time the possibilities of marriage are discussed. Several bottles of vodka are brought. No one mentions that the visit was made until after the next visit at which time the

engagement is settled. Then they may say 'we had ärki zenga'. One of the reasons for maintaining secrecy in the arrangements until the actual engagement was expressed by an informant who said, 'All these negotiations must be kept quiet, for if it was known negotiations were going on, another family might come into the picture'.

If the girl's family seems amenable to a proposal, the first formal visit is made, usually by one or more close male relatives sometimes accompanied by the mother of the prospective husband. Though traditionally the prospective husband never went along on this first visit, in several instances in recent years he was reported to have gone on this first formal visit, accompanying the older representatives of his family. In those cases where the prospective husband has no close male relatives, more distant relatives or senior female relatives may act as substitutes. These representatives, rather than the prospective husband, handle all the negotiations.

At this first formal visit, one or two bottles of vodka are brought by the young man's representatives. The visit is referred to as ärki avchotkha (awx e), 'bringing the vodka'.<sup>12</sup> If the girl's family approves of the match, they will drink from the young man's bottle of vodka. This in a sense seals the match and the arrangements can then be seriously discussed. If the girl's family decides that they do not approve of the match, they do not drink the young man's vodka. Once the proposal is accepted, all may be informed as the betrothal is sealed. The parents of the couple as well as their relatives refer to each other as xudnr, the kin term for child's spouse's parents and family.

At this time or at a subsequent visit, arrangements are discussed for the official engagement or zūlgizh. Meanwhile, the girl's family usually calls together close relatives to discuss arrangements for the engagement and the items that are to be requested of the boy's side. Preliminary discussion among the girl's relatives also begins at this time with regard to the gifts that each of them will present to the new couple.

The girl's family informs the young man's representatives that on a certain date, selected by the priests as being astrologically favorable for the prospective couple, the official engagement will take place. The boy's family is requested to bring a specific number of bottles of vodka, boxes of cookies, borts'k, meat and other items for the celebration. The exact amounts of these items usually reflect the family's economic condition. Thus, during the period in the displaced persons camps, only one bottle of vodka and small amounts of other items were brought.

Other factors may also be involved. At a recent engagement the bride's father, who considers himself important by virtue of his

age, his position as the most senior member of his circle of relations and because of his reputation as a scholar, demanded that the boy's family bring fifty fifths and fifty half pints of vodka in addition to the other items. Even the members of his own family considered the request unreasonable and excessive and were finally able to convince him to reduce the demand to thirty bottles of each size — plus two whole sheep, three bottles of champagne, three bottles of Canadian Club whiskey and several boxes of borts'k and cookies. The man himself was in poor financial circumstances so that the necessary items requested of the girl's family had to be provided by close and distant relatives who were able to bear the expense. At the engagement of the couple whose wedding we shall describe in detail, the boy's family was requested to bring twenty fifths of vodka, ten pints of vodka, one sheep, boxes of cookies, fruit and borts'k.

Ten to fifteen relatives of the boy and the girl attend the official engagement, although it sometimes becomes the occasion for a large party. The girl usually receives a present from the boy and his family which is now almost always a diamond engagement ring, but until recently consisted only of a kerchief with cookies and candy. A small portion of each item brought is placed before the burxan or household shrine in the girl's house — burxandě dēdži erekha placing an offering before the burxan. Customarily, the boy does not attend, although this custom is not always observed.

After the official engagement, the boy and his family may visit the girl's family periodically. They begin to include each other as relations on various ceremonial occasions. For example, the author noted that at a gal tjalg'n ritual where attendance is somewhat restricted and 'everyone' is not invited, the prospective in-laws of the householder's senior male relative in the fourth degree participated along with the senior male relative himself. They were recognized as xudnr, and the kin terms were applied. However, the prospective bride is not supposed to see her fiancé too often or 'people will talk'

The boy's family again takes the initiative in requesting the girl's family's permission to set the date for the marriage. When the girl's family agrees, the father of the boy consults the priest as to an astrologically suitable day for the wedding and for the most suitable time on that day for the bride to leave her natal home. Astrologically suitable dates for 'wishing good luck' to the couple and their families are also set at this time. This is usually the same date for both and is normally several days before the wedding.



After these dates are set, the boy's family again makes a formal visit with vodka to the girl's family to inform them of the dates and to discuss the preparations and arrangements for the wedding. The boy's family are at this time appraised of the items that they are to bring on the day of the wedding, the day they take the girl to her new home.<sup>13</sup>

The official engagement of the couple whose marriage will be described below took place in May. During the previous fall and winter, discussions took place between the two families as to the date of the marriage. The boy's family wanted to set the date in February on a day which the priests had deemed suitable. The girl's mother objected because it coincided with Tsagan Sar, a time of great monetary expenditure for everyone. Also, the maternal uncle of the prospective bride had recently been married and the girl's family felt that they needed a few more months to accumulate money for the necessary expenses. Finally, an alternate date in May was chosen by the priests as suitable. The erekha, the day for wishing the girl and the boy good luck, was set for the weekend before the wedding.

At this time, the priest also uses his astrological knowledge to determine the color of the car (formerly it was the color of the horse) in which the bride would ride to her new home, and to choose the 'best man' who is selected on the basis of his birth date. The astrological juxtaposition of the bride's and groom's horoscopes determines the extent to which the priests must pray for and bless the couple. If 'their dates are good' only a simple blessing is needed; if they are not good, more extensive prayer is necessary.

The boy's family was told to bring the following items to the girl's house on the day of the wedding:

30	fifths of vodka
15	pints of vodka
2	whole lambs
1	crate of oranges
1	crate of apples
20	cases of soda
5	cases of beer
5	cartons of cookies
1	carton of candy
1	carton of <u>borts'k</u>
100	pieces of material, rayon and cotton
100	shirts — of two qualities

About two weeks before the wedding, the bride's mother and maternal aunt drove around to invite relatives and friends to come to their home the next weekend for kükn ede erekha — to wish best wishes to the bride, to congratulate the family and to see the gifts. Invitations to the dance and reception which are held on the evening of the wedding, and to that portion of the wedding which is held at the girl's home are verbally extended when guests come to 'wish the bride well. The dance is sponsored and paid for by the family of the bride. The dance is referred to as kükn gezhilkha (reception for the girl) If this formal reception does not take place in a hall, then a party is held for the girl at her home.

At the same time, representatives of the groom's side, in this case his half sister and brother-in-law, also go to every house to invite people to come to the house of the groom for küvn ger erekha, to wish the boy's house well. Some of the boy's closer relatives are also invited to go with him to get the girl on the day of the wedding. Other relatives and friends who come to 'wish the house well' are invited to the boy's house to be present when the girl arrives. In actuality, the representatives of each side go to almost every house in New Jersey and in Philadelphia to extend invitations so that all are invited to the dance and to the 'wishing well' at both houses as well as to the wedding. While relatives and friends on the boy's side usually 'wish well' to his house, and relatives and friends of the girl's family 'wish well' at her house, one frequently encounters individuals going to both houses even if it necessitates a trip between Freewood Acres and Philadelphia in the same day.

After the date for the wedding has been set, the bride's family continues with its part of the arrangements. The close relatives of the girl decide who will buy the major sets of furniture which the bride will receive from her family to take with her to her new home. The close relatives buy the most expensive gifts.

In this case, the bride's father had no close relatives. Her mother's mother, sisters and brother filled in the category of 'close relations.' All were closely involved in the wedding preparations, for as one informant put it, 'they are all one family.' When they first emigrated to America, the family of the bride lived with the maternal grandmother and her son as a joint household. At the time of the wedding, the bride's family and the maternal grandmother her son and his new bride lived in contiguous households on one large plot of land. Though separate household economies were maintained, there was close cooperation in time of need and on an occasion such as a wedding, when all the resources of the family were mustered to meet extraordinary financial requirements.

The maternal grandmother and maternal uncle who formed one household agreed to buy the living room suite and accessories. One maternal aunt brought the bedroom suite, another the dining room furniture. The youngest maternal aunt, unmarried and living with her mother, bought the wedding dress and veil at a cost of \$175. Sometimes the purchase of these major household items is on credit. The relative may have only enough money for the down payment, paying the balance in monthly installments. The boy's family has no say in the determination of the gifts to be provided by the girl's relatives, but the extent of 'bridal wealth' relates to the prestige of the bride's family.

Besides the presentation of furniture as wedding gifts, the close relatives of the bride also contribute to the other costs incurred by the bride's family. For instance, in our example the bride's family purchased the following for use on the day of 'wishing well':

12	fifths of vodka
1	whole lamb
5	cases of soda
	flour for two cartons of <u>borts'k</u>
	about 30 to 35 pounds

For the reception and dance, the bride's family rented a local hall for \$100 and hired a band of three musicians for \$85 and, in addition, purchased the following for the buffet:

12	fifths of vodka
10	cases of soda
20	pounds of Polish ham
20	pounds of cookies
30	pounds of cake
	Ingredients for the following, prepared by the women of the family:
15	pounds of cole slaw
25	pounds of potato salad
20	pounds of hamburger for meat patties

For use on the wedding day, they purchased another six bottles of vodka and one sheep to add to what was to be brought by the boy's side. They also purchased one hundred pieces of material, three yards each, and one hundred shirts to be given to the guests who came to the wedding.

As the day nears for the 'wishing well, people begin to make visits to the bride's home to wish her well and to present their gifts.

The major household furniture which is presented by her close relatives is usually delivered before this day. The guests are shown all the gifts which have been presented to the bride and informed of the donor of each gift. The amount spent for a gift usually is determined by two factors: the closeness of the relationship felt with the bride and her parents and the donor's financial condition. 'Everyone wants to buy something good, to be, to have for all time, to remember.' For example, an informant indicated that for the coming wedding of her father's father's brother's son's daughter's daughter's daughter she could only afford to give a vacuum cleaner, though she felt that a refrigerator would be a more appropriate gift.

An examination of Figure 8 — which contains a list of all gifts received by the bride, the relationship of the donor and the estimated cost — clearly shows a correlation between the range of gifts in terms of expense and the range of the bride's relatives in terms of their closeness of relationship. It is customary for the bride's relatives and friends of her family to present material gifts so as to provide her with all the household items. This constitutes a maintenance of the tradition whereby a bride came to her new husband with a full complement of household items; only the items have changed. On the other hand, the boy's relatives and friends present gifts of money when they wish his family well. In some instances, individuals will present a gift to the girl's family and money to the boy's, while making visits to both houses to wish the families well.

The bride's close relatives spend the weekend at her family's home to help prepare and serve the food to the many guests who will come. The bride is usually away from the house during this period of 'wishing well' and does not participate in the preparations. According to custom, the bride is not supposed to see or know anything about the gifts given. A member of the bride's family is designated to receive the gifts which are displayed on a large table for all to see. The bride's family records the name of the donor of each gift so as to be able to tell each person who comes the name of the donor of the gift.

In addition to their gifts for the bride, those who come to wish the bride well usually bring a pint of vodka and a box of cookies and sometimes butter. On their arrival, the guests present their gifts and the vodka to a member of the bride's family and are seated at the long table which has been set up in the living room. They are served Kalmyk tea and borts'k and a plate of maken. A toast of vodka poured by the bride's father from a bottle on the table is drunk.

Figure 8. LIST OF WEDDING GIFTS

<u>GIFT</u>	<u>RELATIONSHIP OF DONOR TO BRIDE</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>
Living room suite & lamps	Mother's mother & mother's half brother	\$450
Bedroom suite & lamps	Mother's sister & husband	350
Dining room suite	Mother's sister & husband	250
Wedding dress & veil	Mother's sister	175
Phonograph	Mother's mother's father's father's brother's son's wife & son	100
Silverplated flat-ware	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	75
Sewing machine	Donor's father's father and father's father's father were <u>böl</u>	75
Kitchen table & chairs	Father's long-time friend	65
Vacuum cleaner	Mother's mother's father's father's brother's son's daughter & husband	50
Gold bracelet	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	50
Gold bracelet	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	50
Gold bracelet	Mother's mother's 2nd or 3rd degree <u>naxtsa</u>	50
Dishes	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate & father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	45
Moving picture camera & accessories	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate. Donor's mother is mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	40
Gold & amethyst earrings	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	40
Silverplated tea set	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	40

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Relationship of Donor to Bride</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Writing table & chair	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	40
Gold ring	Donor's wife is father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	35
Gold earrings	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	35
Electric broiler	Mother's mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	35
Silverplated coffee set	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	35
Bookcase	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	30
Clock-radio	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate & mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	30
Pots & pans	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate & father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	30
Telephone table	Father's <u>aimak</u> -mate	30
Silverplated tea set	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	30
Table radio	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	30
Crystal decanter & glasses with silver-plated tray	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	25
Electric toaster	Mother's brother's wife's sister	25
Electric mixer	Friend	25
Large mirror	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	25
Electric toaster	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	25
Electric coffee percolator with accessories	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20
Wool blanket	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20
Crystal glasses	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20
Luggage	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20
Table radio	Father's friend	20
Electric broiler	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Relationship of Donor to Bride</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Tablecloth & bed-spread	Donor's wife is mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	20
Silverplated dish	Donor's dec'd wife was mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	17
Wool blanket	Friend	15
Teapot, cups & saucers	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	15
Clock	Mother's brother's wife's parents	15
Tablecloth	Mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	15
Chafing dish	Mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	15
Cocktail shaker & glasses	Friend	15
Comforter	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	15
Bedspread	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	15
Tablecloth	Friend	15
Embroidered sheet & pillow cases	Friend	10
Bedspread	Groom's <u>aimak</u> -mate	10
Bedspread	Friend	10
Bedspread	Friend	10
Hairbrush, comb & mirror	Friend	10
Two pictures	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Bedspread	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Linen	Mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Towel set	<u>Yasn</u> -mate	10
Aluminum cocktail shaker with set of glasses	Donor's wife's mother is father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Decanter & glasses	Mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Bedspread	Donor's wife is mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Relationship of Donor</u> <u>to Bride</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Cost</u>
Set of glasses	Donor's wife is mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	10
Bedspread	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	10
Bedspread	Mother's brother's wife's relatives ( <u>xudnr</u> )	10
Pitcher & glasses	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	10
Box of candy & \$10	Friend	11. 50
Bedspread	Groom's father's <u>aimak</u> -mate	10
Aluminum butter server & towel set	Friend	9
Linen suit	Father's <u>yasn</u> -mate	8
Dress	Donor's mother was mother's mother's <u>yasn</u> -mate	7
Stainless steel cooker	Friend	6
Bathrobe	Father's & mother's <u>aimak</u> -mate	5
Dress	Friend	5
Purse	Friend	5
Towels	Friend	5
Dress	Friend	5
Dress	Friend	5



After eating, the female guests leave the men to talk at the table and go to admire the gifts. One of the bride's family names the donor of each gift. The female guests go to see the bridal dress and veil and then the major pieces of furniture, which, in our example, were stored in a shed near the house.

No great display of admiration or appreciation is made on the part of the representative of the bride's family who accepts the gift. Her recitation of the names and the gifts is usually made without display of emotion or superlatives, though the female guests evidence much interest in each gift and the donor and make exclamations regarding the extent of the gifts or their quality. This display and interest in the gifts appears to be an accepted tradition, for after the wedding when the bride and her gifts are installed in her new home, it is traditional for older people from the boy's side to visit and admire her gifts. Gifts are remembered, and often on the occasion of another wedding, comparisons are made with gifts received by other brides. In some instances, particularly for the old men, instead of bringing gifts they place a five or a ten dollar bill in a dish located on the table with the other gifts. There are also additional plates on the long table where guests are served. Those who bring gifts usually drop one or two dollars and, once in a while, five or ten dollars into these plates at some time during their visit.

Most people visit the bride's house on the day set aside for the 'wishing well,' although some visit before and others after this day up to the day of the wedding. However, no gifts are presented after the bride leaves for her husband's home on the day of the wedding accompanied by all of her gifts. There is no correlation between the time of the visit 'to wish the bride well' and the closeness of relationship as was the case during Tsagan Sar.

A formal visit to the girl's house by the representatives of the boy's family is made on this day set aside for 'wishing well. In this case, the boy's father, his half-sister and brother-in-law, the ax'lāchě or chief of the boy's side, and the ax'lāchě's mother made up the delegation. The ax'lāchě brought along four quarts of vodka, a half pound of butter, one large bag of borts'k and two boxes of cookies and candy. His wife presented a blue baby's blanket and the traditional woman's dress, the tseg'deg, which the bride wears after she arrives at her new husband's home. These were placed on display with the other gifts.

Before the guests from the boy's side sat down, the ax'lāchě placed the borts'k, cookies and candies on the table. They then sat

down on one side of the table opposite the girl's father and the 'senior' man from the girl's maternal grandmother's yasn, and another elderly man who was accorded great respect. The boy's father proposed a toast to the new couple with vodka poured by the boy's side. The girl's father and the other two older men in succession proposed toasts, pouring for all from the girl's father's bottle. These formal toasts usually include a wish for children and a long line of descendants, 'a dynasty' for the boy's name. The ax'lāchē and another man from the boy's side each dropped five dollars into one of the plates on the table. The money which accumulates in these plates may be used to help defray the immediate expenses of the wedding or may be given to the couple. After the guests from the boy's side were served Kalmyk tea, borts'k and maken, the ladies left the table to view the gifts while the men continued to drink and to toast the new couple. Then the delegation from the boy's side left. During the rest of the day and late into the evening, people continued to visit and to wish the girl well.

During this time, people are also visiting the boy's house to wish him well. The elements of the visit are the same except for the gift. No material gift is brought. Instead, the guest leaves five, ten, fifteen dollars or sometimes more in the plate located on the table where the guests are served. This money may also be used to help defray the expenses incurred by the boy's side. Sometimes it may be given to the couple for their use. These sums of money may reach large proportions. At a recent wedding where the boy was Astrakhan, the amount totalled over \$3,000. As a Buzāva informant put it, 'All the Astrakhan acted as one group of relatives because they have only one or two relatives here or maybe none at all.' They each gave \$300 to \$500 to the boy's family when he married. This particular wedding included a reception by the boy's side after the formal rites in his father's house, the cost of which was covered by one Astrakhan who was not a relative. All the material and shirts were paid for by another who also was not related. So much was contributed that after paying all expenses, the father of the boy was able to buy new furniture for his own house.

Individuals related to both sides will go to both houses, leaving a gift at the girl's house and ten to fifteen dollars at the boy's house. In our example, the bride and the groom were both of the same yasn which created the problem of 'who would be on what side.' Everyone attending must be on one side or the other. Even non-relatives must choose to be on either the bride's side or the groom's side.

An individual included in the delegation from the boy's side coming to take the girl on the wedding day informed the author that he was asked by the boy's father a year before the wedding to be on the boy's side. It was his wife and not he who belonged to the boy's yasn. He indicated that had he not been asked, he would have chosen the girl's side since he was a good friend of her father. Thus, from the operational point of view, it can be seen that the structural pose in the various aspects of marriage always is in terms of two sides, the boy's and the girl's, a reiteration of the structure presented by the historical data.

On Friday, the day of the dance and reception for the bride, her close female relatives, in this case her mother, sisters and maternal aunts prepared the salad and meat for the reception. At about five o'clock in the afternoon, everything was moved to the reception hall. Platters of prepared and purchased foods were placed by the younger members of the bride's family on eleven tables around the hall. A bottle of vodka and bottles of soda were also placed on each table. Everyone, even the younger children, assisted with the preparations. In the meantime, the bride's mother and the older female relatives began to cut the meat and prepare maken for the wedding the next day. All the preparations at the hall were completed by seven o'clock in the evening.

Guests began to arrive at about nine o'clock. The band played and couples danced. As more people arrived, the party became livelier. Soon the bottles of vodka were finished and some of the men left briefly to get drinks at a nearby bar. The bride did not appear until ten-thirty. She entered the hall escorted by the groom and some of his younger relatives. His parents did not attend. Somewhat later, the bride's parents entered. They had been delayed by several people who had come to their house to wish the bride well.

No formal rite or ceremony takes place at this reception. Occasionally, a relative of the bride will make an announcement of best wishes to the couple after which the couple waltzes and then is joined by the guests. It is a social occasion for dancing, drinking and merrymaking and is attended primarily by the young and middle-aged rather than by the older people. It is said to be for the bride's friends, mostly young people, but, in actuality, all but the most senior generation attend.

The next morning, the day of the wedding — referred to as the xur'm — the relatives of the girl gathered at her house. Tables had been set up both in the living room and outside on the lawn. At about 10:45 A. M., the time designated astrologically as favorable for their arrival, four or five cars drove up the road leading to the bride's house. In the first car was the ax'lāchě and the groom.

The other representatives of the boy's side were in the remaining cars. They included the boy's mother, his half sister, his brother's in-law mother, another half sister and her husband, his half brother and the latter's American wife and her sister and brother-in-law, three men who were yasn mates of the groom and two men whose wives were yasn mates of the groom. All the cars were parked in front of the house. A three-man delegation, not including the ax'lächě, entered the girl's house carrying a pitcher of Kalmyk tea and a bottle of vodka. The rest of the delegation, including the groom, waited outside near the cars.

The three men were seated at the table and poured drinks of vodka for the girl's father and for several other men from her side from the bottle which they had brought. They talked for a few minutes but made no toasts. They requested permission to present the items which they had brought. The three men then left the girl's house and returned to the cars. Meanwhile, the other men on the boy's side had begun to unload the cartons and boxes and other items which they had brought. When the three-man delegation returned, the cartons and boxes were moved and piled on the right side of the stoop of the girl's house. The members of the boy's side then went back to stand near their cars while the three-man delegation again entered the girl's house to inform her side that everything was piled next to the house waiting to be counted.

Two men from the girl's side came outside, opened the cartons and counted the bottles of vodka to make sure that all that had been requested had been brought. Traditionally, if anything was missing, the girl's side might refuse to accept any of the items and the wedding would not take place until all the items requested were at hand. One informant recounted that sometimes young children from the girl's side would steal the liver from a sheep that had been brought and the boy's side would have to go some distance to replace this missing item. Though formerly all items were counted, at present the counting is cursory. Sometimes only the vodka is counted, the word of the boy's delegation being accepted for the balance. After the items were checked, each member of the boy's delegation picked up a carton of food or drink and brought it inside.

When all the items were safely inside, those on the boy's side sat down at the table in the living room. They were served Kalmyk tea by the women of the girl's side. The girl's father and other men from her side who were seated opposite the boy's side poured them drinks from the hosts' bottle. Toasts to the couple and the girl's family were made by the ax'lächě and the other men of the boy's delegation. Many other guests, relatives and friends, young

and old were seated at other tables inside the house and outside on the lawn. They were also served Kalmyk tea and vodka by the close relatives on the girl's side.

Many young people and children milled about but did not participate in this service and toast. The constant coming and going added to the noise and seeming confusion. In fact, one's first impression on attending a Kalmyk wedding is of the large crowd, the tumult and what appears to be utter chaos. However, after attending several weddings, one soon realizes that there are regularities and consistencies in the procedures and that all is not chaos and confusion.

After the delegation from the boy's side was served, the woman from the boy's side served all of the members of the girl's side Kalmyk tea, maken and the other foods that had been brought and cooked. The men from the boy's side opened the bottles of vodka which they had brought and poured drinks for the girl's side who, in turn, toasted the boy's side. Drinks and toasts were exchanged by the men of both sides and the eating and drinking continued. There was occasional singing by the older men and women.

The bride remained apart during the festivities with several of the young men and women. She put on the white dress and veil and together with the groom and 'best man' and several of their young relatives and friends went to the temple for the priest's blessing.

The religious aspect of the marriage rite at present appears to be totally separate from the other aspects. As previously noted, the extent, nature and content of the blessing by the priest are said to depend upon the compatibility of the couple's horoscopes. Informants indicate that if the astrological backgrounds of both are 'good,' 'everything is between them good,' and the religious blessing need not take place. If their birth dates are not completely compatible or some other factor is present, then 'they make a ceremony to make it good for them. In one case, for example, the groom had been a manji (religious novice) in his youth and the priests 'had to separate him from that life. In most cases, the blessing takes place even if the dates are correct 'to make sure everything is all right.' According to Kalmyk tradition, the bride need not wear any special dress for this temple ceremony as she does in her new husband's home, but she does wear a scarf of a color which is astrologically determined. The priest may perform this blessing in the temple while the boy's side is at the girl's home.

On their arrival at the temple, the bride removed her veil and the couple entered and made obeisance to the various sacred relics.

The two priests of the temple entered and accepted a small offering of cookies, *borts'k*, butter and candy from the groom's half-sister which they placed on a small table before the altar. A white sheet was draped by one of the priests over two chairs. He then sprinkled rice grains on top of the sheet, covering the rice with a portion of the sheet. The couple sat down on these chairs. The priests returned to their accustomed seats and chanted prayers for about fifteen minutes. One of the priests then went to the altar and removed the incense holder and brought it to the couple who were each given a whiff of it. He gave some holy water to the groom and to the bride with which they washed their hands, faces and mouths. The waste water was deposited into a large platter. After this, the priest approached the couple with his small miter and bell. While reciting a prayer, he touched the groom's head first with the bell and then with the miter and then touched the head of the bride in the same order. The priest returned to his seat and the couple arose from their chairs and made obeisance on their knees in the direction of the altar, concluding the ceremony. The rest of the party made obeisance to the various religious relics while the bride and groom approached the priests, receiving a handkerchief with coins tied in one corner. The sheet on which they sat was carefully folded to preserve the rice pattern. (The couple would sleep on this sheet — the *shirduk* — with the rice for the first three nights.) The priests and witnesses signed the legal marriage certificate and the party returned to the bride's home, the bride again going into seclusion with several of her girl friends.<sup>14</sup>

Soon afterward, the women from the bride's side began to give out the pieces of material and shirts. The shirt is usually unpinned and is draped over the man's shoulder with the sleeves tied in front. The pieces of material are draped over the shoulders of the women. The less expensive shirts and material are presented to the more distant relatives and to the rest of the party, including the bride's more distant and non-traceable relatives and friends. The groom receives an expensive gift from the bride's side — in this case, a \$70.00 suit. Informants noted that thirty or forty years ago, the close relatives received gifts which were previously stipulated in the wedding arrangements, such as a fur coat or a horse. Now the close relatives merely receive a better piece of material or a more expensive shirt.

Then the boy's side distributed their pieces of material and shirts which they had brought, the better items going to the closer relatives of the bride and the less expensive items going to her more

distant relatives and friends as well as to his. In some instances, the groom's side distributes to the bride's side first. One informant stated that the latter was the usual procedure and was referred to as kükn ger avxä — the girl's house takes. In the several weddings witnessed by the author, the girl's side started to distribute first but before they were finished, the boy's side began their distribution.

In one instance, the groom's mother felt that her daughters had received very cheap materials from the bride's side at the wedding. She complained only to her own relatives so as not to create bad feeling. She said that 'since they were close relatives of the groom, they should have received better gifts.' She felt it necessary to give each of her daughters ten dollars to compensate for this slight.

After the distribution of materials and shirts by both sides, the truck which was hired for the occasion was moved close to the house so that all of the bride's gifts could be loaded and moved to her new home. As the boy's side moved the furniture and other items out of the bride's house, members of her side made mock physical attempts to stop them. This continued until all of the bride's gifts, clothing and possessions were moved out. When the truck was filled, the remaining items were placed in the cars belonging to the boy's side.

About fifteen minutes before the deadline which had been astrologically determined by the priest as the time by which the couple must be out of the house, the boy's side began to search for the bride. During all this time, she remained in another part of the house or in a nearby house with young people from her side. They kept her in hiding so that the boy's side had to find her to take her. They demanded gifts from the boy's side before they would give her up. Frequently, the boy's side must give a bottle of vodka, cigarettes and cake.

At this time, the bride usually prays before the household shrine for the last time as a maiden. This is known as kükn burxande mergexä, girl praying before the burxan. The groom is with her and may also kneel and pray. This is a time for a display of emotion on the part of the girl's parents and her close relatives. At the time she is to leave, a member of the girl's family stands in front of the couple with a glass of milk. The bride, the best man and the groom, in turn, sip the milk which is then passes around to the other people on the boy's side. A shirt is draped over the shoulders of the best man. Then a scarf of the color chosen by the priests is placed over the bride's head by the best man as she leaves her house for the last time as a maiden. The couple and the best man then go to the car which is to bring them to their new home.

While the newly married couple in this case waited in the car, two men from the boy's side went to a small rise of ground near where they parked their cars on arrival. They took a small cardboard box and placed in it some of the crepe paper streamers which decorated the cars and set it afire. On the ground nearby was a blue baby blanket which had been brought by the boy's side as a gift for the bride. Those from the boy's side and from the girl's side who were standing around were served drinks by the boy's side from their vodka bottles. All placed change and bills on the blanket. Some of the ashes from the fire were also placed on the blanket which was then carefully folded and wrapped and brought to the car in which the couple was sitting. This ceremony is the xoš erekha or 'firing up'. Older informants' reports of pre-revolutionary tactics recount that traditionally the boy came from a different area. A small yurt was built near the girl's home for the boy's family to use when they came to take the bride. Normally, it was used for two or three days. Before the girl came out of her parents' tent, the girl's family drank with the boy's family. The tent was then dismantled and the fire extinguished before they left with the girl.

The members of the boy's delegation then re-entered their cars. Several members of the girl's side who were to accompany her to her new home entered the cars. The cars and the truck moved off in a procession, with the car carrying the couple and the ax'lachě leading the way.

About a mile down the road, the procession halted and the men from both the girl's side and the boy's side left their cars and went up to the lead car where they were served vodka by the ax'lachě. The procession continued on its way, stopping several times before the boy's house in Philadelphia was reached. This tradition of stopping to drink on the way is referred to as tsatsluazhen (tsatslxă, 'to sprinkle water').

When the procession arrived at its destination, the bride knelt on the doorstep of the boy's house and was ushered into the house. She was then escorted to a special room prepared for her where she remained with her friends. All the gifts, furniture and other items were removed from the truck and cars and arranged in several rooms which were set aside for the couple in the boy's house. Everything had to be in the boy's house before the formal delegation from the girl's side arrived at his house. Those of her side who had come with her were escorted inside the house to another room where a formal table was set with place settings and platters of food and with soda and vodka. The boy's side in this case spared no effort in



service to those of the girl's side who formed her escort. Endless toasts were proposed alternatively by the girl's side and by the boy's side.

One or two hours later, the delegation of senior relatives from the girl's side arrived. In this case, they included the girl's mother, her maternal grandmother, her maternal aunts, and senior male and female relatives related to the girl's maternal grandmother, yasn mates of the girl's father, yasn mates of the girl's mother and yasn mates of the girl's maternal grandmother. They brought uncooked meat, vodka and borts'k. They were seated at tables and served Kalmyk tea, borts'k and maken by the boy's side and toasts were drunk.

Before the members of the bride's side leave, she changed into the tseg'deg, the traditional dress of a married woman, and her hair was plaited into two plaits. She then knelt at the doorstep of the room where her new husband's father sat, her head covered with the scarf used during the blessing. The best man stood at her side while she genuflected. She moves her head up and down the requisite number of times depending on the number of relatives of the boy and his father, alive or deceased, including only törl relatives, not naxtsa, that her father-in-law recites to her. Then she served her new husband's relatives vodka and in return received the empty glass filled with money or gifts of gold jewelry. At this point, the bride may be given a new name by her father-in-law. This name normally is used only by her in-laws and older people. In one or two instances, the bride did not change into the traditional dress or have her hair plaited during this rite of paying respect to her new in-laws. This was felt to be a change from the customary way of doing things and not the proper form.

The bride's side then left and as they made their exit, they were given sips of milk.<sup>15</sup> The day after the wedding, many guests come to visit at the boy's house to see the gifts. Some left coins in a plate which was placed on one of the tables. During the next few days, the couple visited the husband's close relatives. They brought vodka and candy and the bride received gifts of money and jewelry in exchange.

Within a month after the marriage rite, the wife's parents and a group of her close relatives make a formal visit to the home of their new son-in-law and his parents. After the date is set, the boy's parents call some of their own closer relatives, inviting them to be present when the visit is made. The mother and father of the girl decide upon those from their side who will form the delegation. The group usually consists of fifteen to twenty close relatives. In

our own example, the group included the father and mother of the girl, maternal grandmother, mother's sister and her husband, mother's half brother and his wife, maternal grandmother's father's father's brother's son's wife, her son and his wife, her daughter and her husband, and father's long-time friend.

The delegation brought several bottles of vodka, uncooked meat, borts'k, cookies, candy and fruit. The meat was set to cook by the boy's mother. The relatives of the boy were the hosts and served the food. When the guests from the girl's side arrived, they were seated and were served Kalmyk tea, borts'k and maken by the hosts. Toasts of vodka were drunk to the couple and to the families. Platters of stuffed cabbage, salads and other meats were also served. When the meat brought by the girl's side was cooked, it was served separately by the boy or other members of his family and it was announced that this was gidja (gītši) maken, or guests' meat. Kalmyk dancing and singing commenced after the food was served. Eating and drinking continued, platters being periodically replenished and empty vodka bottles replaced with full ones. Just before the group from the girl's side left, they received gifts from the boy's parents. Members of the girl's immediate family received shirts and blouses, while her more distant relatives received scarves. Members of the boy's family did not receive any gifts.

After this first visit to the new son-in-law, daughter and the xudnr, the girl's family visits the homes of close relatives of the groom. Traditionally, these visits were said to last twenty-four hours or more. The whole cycle of visits to the boy's family and his relatives might have lasted two weeks. During the emigré period and at the present time, the visits have been shortened to several hours. In some cases, the problems of time and distance limit visits to no more than several hours, although in a recent first formal visit seven other houses were visited. At each, the delegation received handkerchiefs and scarves.

Soon after this first formal visit, the newly married couple and a group from the boy's side, including his parents and close relatives, make a first formal visit to the girl's parents' home. The delegation to the girl's home included, in this case, the new couple, the boy's father and mother, both half-sisters and their husbands, half-brother and his wife and one of father's aimak mates. The procedure was the same. The boy's side brought several bottles of vodka, uncooked meat, borts'k, cookies and candies. Part of the uncooked meat and other items were set aside from what was brought and small amounts of each were brought to her other relatives' homes. The girl's side acted as the hosts. After the festivities, the boy's

delegation received gifts and went on to make visits to the other relatives of the girl. After this exchange of visits, normal relations are resumed between the two families who now interact as relatives. The girl is now permitted to visit her family or her relatives any time she chooses.

Abduction of the bride, the institutionalized alternative to the traditional protracted rites of marriage, also continues to be practiced today. The abduction of the bride, now referred to as 'the couple running off,' usually occurs for two reasons. One reason is that the parents have objected to the marriage because of a close kin relationship between the bride and groom. The second reason is that the girl's parents are presently unable to afford a wedding and the couple do not wish to delay. In both instances, the wedding ceremony and rite which traditionally take place at the girl's house are eliminated. When the couple returns, the girl must genuflect at the doorstep of the boy's house. Later a celebration may sometimes take place at the boy's house. The bride changes into a tseg'deg and has her hair parted before the guests arrive. She then pays her respects to her new husband's relatives by bowing to them and serving them vodka, receiving money in the returned glass. Some of her relatives may come but not her parents. Some time later, formal visits will be exchanged by the couple's families as in traditional weddings. The proportion of couples married in this way is small.

Divorce and separation occur, more frequently in cases where there are no children. Some Kalmyks have noted that since the war there have been an increased number of divorces and remarriages, whereas previously there were few. It is possible that a combination of the continued arrangement of marriages by parents and a trend toward neolocality has been the cause of this increase. It may be that, previously, marriages were more enduring because of the incorporation of the couple into a large family unit which brought pressure to keep the couple together. A recollection of our historical material, however, indicates that the frequency of divorce in the earlier periods varies in degree with the author cited.

Thus, it may be seen that the importance of the rites of marriage as an institutional complex in the lives of the Kalmyks has continued through their history to the present day — our analysis providing insight into both its change and continuity. We have also seen that the relationship between the families of the couple is established and affirmed by a complex of rites and ceremonies, and that the basic configuration of these has been preserved, despite change and consolidation in details. Data on marriage rites among

the Kalmyk Mongols in the Soviet Union today as collected by Mrs. L. Victorova reveals that much of the ceremonial context, the structural alignments and the extensive gift giving have also been maintained within the Soviet context (Personal Communication). Comparison of this data with our account of Kalmyk marriage rites in the United States reveals many similarities.

Our examples are a further illustration of the accommodations being made in the sphere of social relations. The categories of close relationship whose members would handle the bulk of detail in the marriage rites were no doubt traditionally composed of patrilineal relatives. In their absence, the same functions are now carried out by matrilineal relatives or relatives from the successively more distant kin circles surrounding ego and his family.

## NOTES

1. Since, with one exception, we have no case records or other records indicating the manner or degree to which the code was administered, we do not know to what degree regulations were observed. Nevertheless, the degree of detail and regulation give us some idea of the manner in which marriage was regulated.

2. In some cases, his parents had arranged a match for him while he was still a child with the daughter of an intimate friend of the family.

3. Pallas does not indicate whether or not the rites and ceremonies differed in the two locations. Since only one description is given, it seems reasonable to infer that they were the same. There is no internal evidence in the description itself to support a contrary inference.

4. The significance and symbolic meaning of this invocation is not recorded by Pallas. However, we note that the sheep's shin bone and butter are found within the context of other ceremonies.

5. Bergmann however does not mention the preliminary feast held by the groom's parents for the bride's parents as recorded by Pallas, the first occasion at which the two groups meet. According to the Bergmann account, the betrothal feast is the first occasion for such a meeting. Observers after Bergmann record only a betrothal feast at the bride's home. The preliminary feast at the boy's house recorded by Pallas either was no longer observed or was a tribal variation not recorded by other observers.

6. Later observers follow Bergmann. Therefore, we may reasonably assume that the alternative observed by Pallas was no longer the custom.

7. In the following description, Kalmyk place names and terms are transliterations from the Cyrillic of Zhitetski.

8. This custom of arranging marriages even before the birth of children is still remembered. One of the author's principal informants, whose wife was pregnant, as a joke began to call the author, who was also pregnant, and her husband by the terms used for child's spouse's parents thereby signifying such an arrangement.

9. These Kalmyks were primarily Astrakhan men who had left Russia in forced-labor groups.

10. These marriages to non-Kalmyks appear to be concentrated in certain families.

11. For example, the groom in the marriage discussed in detail in this chapter has an American sister-in-law. She participated in the various marriage activities and gave much assistance in the necessary food preparations though she knows little Kalmyk and has no knowledge of procedures.

12. The Buzāva use this term to refer to this first visit. The Astrakhan use the term recorded by Zhitetski nigen bortkha and this term interchangeably.

13. The author witnessed and collected data on several wedding. The figures and specific data from the wedding observed in the greatest detail will be used in the following description.

14. There appears to be some variation in the procedure involved in the blessing of the couple. At a wedding between an Astrakhan boy and a Buzāva girl previously mentioned, the blessing of the couple in the Astrakhan Temple after they had left the girl's house was somewhat different. The couple merely entered the temple and stood before the priests some distance from the altar. The priests recited a short prayer, gave the couple sacred medals and scarves as gifts and then left.

15. Once they leave they may not visit again until they make a formal visit to the boy's home which is then reciprocated by a formal visit of the boy's side with the new bride to her parental home. Until she makes this visit, she cannot go home to visit her parents. After these two visits, regular visiting may be resumed.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE KALMYK SOCIAL UNIT

Previous chapters, particularly those concerned with the analyses of the celebration of Tsagan Sar and the rites and ceremonies involved in marriage, have provided us with an operational view of the social structure which characterizes the Kalmyk group in the United States today. In this chapter we will, following a brief discussion of relevant theoretical concepts and a summary of pertinent historical materials, concern ourselves with the social structure itself and its principles of organization.

#### Concepts to be Utilized

A distinction will be made between unit and group; unit being defined merely as a category of individuals delimited on the basis of a particular criterion such as common descent from a particular ancestor; while group will refer to all or part of a unit where the constituent members participate as a whole in activities, e.g., a group with corporate ownership of a particular property.

The important distinction between kin relations recognized as a basis for recruitment or assignment to some kind of group or unit, and kin relations recognized for some other purpose not involving group or unit membership will also be referred to.

Another important analytical and structural distinction which will be of value is that between kin units or kin groups where the point of reference is a common ancestor, and kin units or kin groups where the focal point of reference is a particular ego, i.e., ego-oriented. This distinction, recognized by Goodenough (1962), is not necessarily congruent with a unilineal/non-unilineal distinction. Goodenough himself has pointed out that ancestor-oriented non-unilineal kin groups exist in the South Pacific (1955). As we shall see, the Kalmyks conceptualize an agnatic kin unit which is ego-oriented.

### Historical Background<sup>1</sup>

The historical sources present, in general, a picture of a pyramidal political structure of successively more encompassing groups ranging from the xoton or nomadic camp through the aimak, otok (or rod) and ulus, to the tribe (tangachi) and tribal federation (oirat) each ruled by a hereditary leadership. These, from the time of the Kalmyk removal to the South Russian steppes, became increasingly superseded by Russian governmental institutions, until by the latter part of the nineteenth century only three levels of units remained. These remained as mere shells: within them the political and administrative functions as well as the selection of functionaries had been completely transformed.

This pyramidal political structure and its component units, according to many of the sources, appears at a very early period to have had a kinship basis of organization: that is, a segmentary lineage system was, in the early period, the channel for political power and administrative functions. Later, as the increasingly complex political structure was solidified and strengthened from the top, its kinship basis was quickly outpaced as an operative principle of organization, though kinship persisted as a means of expressing social unity and relationship. Thus, even as late as 1928, Mol'kov states that the Kalmyks 'express the well-known idea of gradations of relationship between relatives through the xoton, aimak, rod and ulus levels of organization, . . . though the meaning of these units is in terms of different orders of administration, under these stratified layers of administration remains the kin basis' (1928:289-290). As we shall see, kinship continues to operate as the most important basis for and means of expression of social relationship in the Kalmyk social structure.

### Kalmyk Social Structure Today

At the present time, above the level of the residence unit — family, nuclear or extended — there are no formal kin groups in terms of our stipulated usage; that is, there are no formally organized kin units which act as wholes in particular activities with respect to which decisions are made. However, terminologically defined kin units of several types do exist, toward the members of which ego acts in particular ways and out of which ad hoc assemblages are from time to time formed for specific purposes or occasions.



Previous investigators have extensively documented the kinship terminology of the Kalmyks (Aberle 1953 and Adelman 1954). Their analyses and the usage encountered by the author appear to be consistent (Figure 9).<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, further extensive analysis of the terms was felt to be unnecessary and attention was diverted instead to the kin units and categorizations.

Aberle and Adelman both distinguish 'patrilineage'. Aberle defines it on the basis of the extension of kin terminology as 'a group of individuals whose kinship through males can be clearly established' (1953:11). Though he indicates that it is named, he does not indicate the naming principle used. Adelman indicates that although there is no term for lineage, operationally and with reference to the terminology there is a maximal lineage — the unit of seven generations from ego — and a minimal lineage — that portion of the maximal lineage which constitutes the basis of the traditional patrilocal extended family. The minimal lineage is also terminologically distinct (Adelman 1954:76). In both instances, the extent of the unit is coincident with the limits of the extension of the patrilineally determined segment of the kinship terminology, the determination of these units in fact being made by Adelman primarily on the basis of the kinship terminology.

The kinship terminology of the Kalmyks is characterized by the existence of separate terms to denote the degrees of relationship up to four generations ascending. A combination of words is used to denote five, six and seven generations ascending. Separate terms are combined to denote up to seven degrees collaterally; separate terms are also employed to denote seven generations of direct descent from ego.<sup>3</sup>

Though no referent for this unit is provided by Aberle or by Adelman, our own investigations have shown that it is referred to variously as törl törsn, pokalenee törlmüd or törskn törl. We agree with Aberle and Adelman as to the Kalmyk categorization of such a unit; however, we feel that they have wrongly assigned the term 'lineage' to this unit.

The accepted definition of 'lineage' usually follows along the lines of the Notes and Queries definition, to wit: 'a lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations' (1954:88). This definition, consistent with usual usage, pictures the lineage as an ancestor-oriented rather than ego-oriented unit; that is, the lineage consists of individuals descended from a particular person. By this definition, reference to the unit described above as an 'ego-oriented lineage' (Adelman 1954:88) is a contradiction in terms. Furthermore,

when one encounters the lineage in the ethnographic literature, the point of departure is always an apical ancestor. In the törl törsn, the point of departure is always a particular ego and for each ego, the törl törsn is somewhat different. The lineage, however, is the same for all those reckoned as a part of it in terms of their descent from the apical ancestor. In the törl törsn, the individuals included are those within seven degrees of patrilineal relationship (or patrilineal filiation) — ascending, collateral and descending from the particular ego. The categories of kin relationship within each degree are covered by distinct kin terms or combinations of terms, each degree of kin distance being terminologically differentiated.

Several other points refute the picture of the törl törsn as a lineage. If one accepts the analysis that the unit is a lineage in terms of including all the descendants from an ancestor seven generations ascending from ego, including descendants from that ancestor seven generations below ego, then it should, by definition, include individuals in the descending generations from ego who are descendants of his seventh collateral relative in his own generation. However, the törl törsn does not include such individuals since they are beyond seven degrees away from ego. The törl törsn of father, son or grandson is slightly different from that of ego since seven generations from son would eliminate father's seventh-degree relative. Close examination of the terminology reveals still further evidence in support of the conclusion that the törl törsn is not a lineage but rather an ego-oriented agnatic unit consisting of individuals tracing relationship through males within seven degrees of relationship to ego in ascendant, collateral and descendant generations. The problem posed by Aberle as to the usage of the same term for son's son and brother's son and the same term for brother's son's son and son's son's son despite the seemingly consistent lineal/collateral distinction would also be resolved by this new view, since the term would refer to individuals who are the same number of degrees away from ego in descending generations.

Bacon, in her work on Central Asian social structure, has recognized the differentiation of the törl törsn type of unit from a lineage by referring to the former as a sliding lineage; that is, individuals related within a specific number of degrees ascending, descending and collateral to ego. She refers to the terminology associated with this unit as step-stair terminology, in which specific terms are used to denote each degree of kin distance (Bacon 1958: 85-6). The author believes that because of the particular characteristics of this type of unit, it should not be referred to as a lineage but as an ego-oriented unilineal — in this case, agnatic — kin unit.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 9. Kalmyk Mongol Kinship Terminology

Agnates:

Ascending generation:

etske .	father
eke .	mother
öbk' etske .	father's father
öbk' eke .	father's mother
ölenceg' etske .	father's father's father
ölenceg' eke .	father's father's mother
ölenceg' etske .	father's father's father's father

For lineal ascendants above the third ascending generation and up to the seventh generation combinations of the above terms are used, for example, öbeke etskin etske for grandfather's father.

awgä .	male collateral in ascending generation, i. e., father's brother, father's father's brother
--------	---

At present, this term is frequently used for non-traceable patrilineal male relatives in ascending generations 'out of politeness'.

gaga .	female collateral in ascending generation, i. e., father's sister, father's father's sister
--------	---

Own generation:

axa .	elder brother
ekči .	elder sister
dü kükn .	younger sister
dü küvn .	younger brother

Male and female collaterals in ego's generation are referred to as üye plus one of the sibling terms depending on age relative to ego or depending on the seniority of the linking relative. Up to seven degree of collaterality can be distinguished by the use of numerical prefixes, for example, second degree collateral would be referred to as xoirdgchnr üye axa, third degree collateral would be gorvdgchnr üye axa and so forth.

Descending generation:

küvn .	son
kükn .	daughter

## Cognates:

naxtsa eke	mother's mother
naxtsa etske .	mother's father
naxtsa .	mother's male siblings and male collaterals regardless of generation (up to three degrees from ego)
naxtsa ekči .	mother's female siblings and female collaterals regardless of generation (i. e. , mother's sister, mother's brother's daughter; this category includes only those females related to ego's mother's family through patrilineal links)
böl .	mother's sister's children
bölencer	mother's sister's children's children
zēnēr, coll.	
zē kūn, zē kūn .	children of any female consanguine patrilineally related to ego, i. e. children of sister, children of father's sister, children of brother's daughter, children of daughter
zēntsēr or xoirdgchn'r	
zēner	children of male or female zēnēr
gorvdgchnr zēner	. children of male or female zēntsēr

## Agnates: (continued)

### Descending generation: (continued)

aci kūvn or kūn .	.son's son or daughter, brother's son or daughter
zici kūvn or kūn .	third generation lineal descendant, male or female or second lineal descendant from ego's brother
zillike kūvn or kūn .	fourth generation lineal descendant, male or female or third lineal descendant from ego's brother
tailleker kūvn or kūn .	fifth generation lineal descendant, male or female or third lineal descendant from ego's brother
talltue kūvn or kūn .	sixth generation lineal descendant, male or female or fourth lineal descendant from ego's brother

### Affinals:

awgã bergen .	father's brother's wife
gaga kurgin axa .	father's sister's husband
naxtsa bergen . .	mother's brother's wife
naxtsa kurgin axa.	mother's sister's husband
(axa) bergen .	elder brother's wife
kurgin axa	elder sister's husband
du ber	younger brother's wife
du kurgin .	younger sister's husband
kurgin .	son-in-law
ber	daughter-in-law
xudnr	child's spouse's family:
xud emgn	male
xud iugn	female
xadam eke	mother-in-law
xadam etske	father-in-law

### Male speaking:

gergin .	wife
xadam axa .	wife's elder brother
xadam bergen	wife's elder brother's wife
kur du küvn .	wife's younger brother
kur du ber	wife's younger brother's wife
xadam ekči	wife's elder sister
baza .	wife's elder or younger sister's husband
kur du kükn .	wife's younger sister
kur duuna küvn or kükn .	wife's brother's child
zē	wife's sister's child

### Female speaking:

zaluu	husband
axa xadam	husband's elder brother
küvn du	husband's younger brother
baza .	husband's elder or younger brother's wife
aci	husband's brother's child
xadam ekči	husband's elder sister
kükn du	husband's younger sister
kurgin axa	husband's elder sister's husband
du kurgin .	husband's younger sister's husband
zē	husband's sister's child

This type of unit has been distinguished for other Mongolian nomadic pastoral groups. It also appears to resemble the Celtic unit termed 'fine' and the Arabic ahl (Powell 1958:76; D'Arbois de Jubainville 1905:1-25).

This important principle of ego-orientation is also utilized, though in a more complex fashion, in the delineation of another Kalmyk kin unit. One's törl törsn, of which ego is a member, is differentiated from other groups of relatives related to ego but of which he is not a member. These include relatives through direct female consanguines — daughter, sister, father's sister — collectively termed zēnēr; groups of relatives related to ego through direct female ascendants who have married into his törl törsn — mother, father's mother — collectively termed bölner. These groups of kin combine to form the elgn sadn. The separation between the törl törsn and the elgn sadn is clearly and consistently made. It was symbolically put by one informant in the following terms, 'Man's seed is always white and is always coming bone. Woman's seed is red and always coming flesh.' The elgn sadn also includes ego's wife's relatives, the category xadmūd, and the families of children's spouses termed xudnr.<sup>5</sup>

The organization of the elgn sadn is more complex than that of the törl törsn. The elgn sadn and its subcategories have as their point of reference ego's törl törsn rather than himself. The boundaries of the elgn sadn and its subcategories are determined again in terms of degree as is reflected in the terminology. The point of reference is not ego himself but is his törl törsn, which itself is ego-oriented. Though the elgn sadn reflects a further degree of complexity, it contrasts with lineage type units which clearly have a particular ancestor as their point of reference.

These various subcategories within the elgn sadn have defined boundaries. Thus, in the zēnēr category, the children of any female consanguine of one's törl törsn are termed zē (collectively zēnēr) whether they are the children of sister, father's sister or daughter. The children of male or female zēnēr are termed zēntsēr or zēnčēr. Numerical prepositives may be used to denote further degrees of relationship. Zēnēr and zēntsēr, the first and second degree zē relatives, are considered to be part of the elgn sadn; there is a question as to the inclusion of the third degree zē relative. All degrees of zē beyond the third degree are not considered to be part of the elgn sadn, though some type of relationship may sometimes be recognized. As one informant termed it, 'zē have one-half our blood, zēntsēr have one quarter, third zē maybe five percent, and

beyond that the amount is so small that they no longer are of our blood'. Within the subcategory of bölnēr, the children of mother's sister are termed bölnēr and they are included in the elgn sadn. The children of bölnēr are termed bölenčēr but there is some question concerning the inclusion of these second degree bölnēr relatives in the elgn sadn. Beyond this degree, the relationship is no longer reckoned.

Females who have married into ego's törl törsn are set off terminologically from their natal kin who are collectively termed naxtsanar. For example, the term for mother is eke and the terms for lineal female ascendants are eke used in conjunction with the prepositives for male ascendants. The limits of degrees of reckoning within the categories of naxtsa are not indicated in the terminology which delineates the female ascendant's mother and father — naxtsa eke, naxtsa etske — and male and female collaterals regardless of generation — naxtsa and naxtsa ekči — thus categorizing this system as of the Omaha type. Informants indicate the limits of the inclusion of individuals in the elgn sadn from the naxtsanār subcategory in a reciprocal manner by saying that people who call ego zēntsēr, and, maybe, third zē are included; that is, people related up to three degrees away from ego. Adelman points out the 'strangeness of the classification of maternals making linguistic identity of persons of different kin groups such as mother's brother, mother's mother's brother and father's mother's brother' (1954:95). This apparent anomaly becomes clear when the point of orientation is shifted to ego's törl törsn. From this point of orientation, these individuals would stand the same kin-distance away from ego's törl törsn and thus would be logically lumped together. The degree of extension of the xadmūd, ego's wife's family, seems to be limited to individuals within two degrees of relationship to ego's wife, though one informant volunteered the heretofore unrecorded term naxtsa xadmūd to refer to wife's mother's family.

The category of xudnr, children's spouse's families, is differentiated only in terms of male and female by the use of the postpositives emgn and öugn — old man and old woman. The xudnr seem to include more than the immediate parents of child's spouse, but there is a question as to who else beyond the immediate family is included.

Thus, we can see that in the elgn sadn and in its subgroupings in a more complex fashion, the principle of ego orientation and the inclusion or exclusion in terms of number of degrees away from ego is played out.

Women who marry individuals within ego's törl törsn also appear to be included in the törl törsn, 'They are not of our blood but are included because their children are of our blood.' This inclusion is reflected terminologically by the use of separate terms for mother and father's mother which are distinct from the term referring to mother's sister and father's mother's sister (Aberle 1953:25). In addition, these individuals marrying in use consanguineal terms for husband's consanguineal relatives in descending generations (their affinals).

A married woman uses the term törkn to refer to her natal group. Some informants defined it as a specific and limited unit including only wife's parents, brothers and sisters and brother's children, and questioned the inclusion of brothers' wives. Sisters' spouses and children were definitely excluded. Other informants defined the group as including all people who were relatives to her before her marriage, including those beyond törl törsn but excluding affinals. Some included spouses of agnates while others excluded them. Some included cognates and spouses and some did not. One older female informant defined the törkn functionally as being all the relatives whom a married woman did not visit for forty-nine days following the death of one of their number. As one could not visit naxtsanar (mother's family), they would be included in törkn. Aberle's definition of the törkn is in accord with the definition which excludes cognates.

Terminologically and behaviorally, the incorporation of the female into her husband's group is almost complete. Ties remain with her natal group which (as noted in Chapter III) historically provided a basis for her son's claim to some of his mother's brother's property. Also, mother's brother's daughter beyond the third degree is felt to be a good choice of mate.

Within the törl törsn and the elgn sadn and its subcategories, distinctions are also made with respect to kinship distance on a unit basis as well as with respect to determinations of degree. In the törl törsn, the distinction generally is made on the basis of örxn or near — one to three generations of removal from ego — and xol or distant — four to seven degrees of removal from ego. In the category of örxn, more immediate relatives within one or two degrees of relationship may also be singled out. Adelman cites the use of the classifier törsn for these close relatives (1954:103). For example, the term törsn awgä is used for real father's brother as distinct from classificatory father's brother. The author, however, did not encounter this usage. Deget örnxn, or very close, was sometimes used to delineate this group. Adelman indicates that for the



Astrakhan, örxn includes all seven degrees, or the circle of kin outside of immediate relatives but within the törl törsn; while xol was reserved for eight generations or degrees of removal and beyond. However, Astrakhan informants indicated that xol and örxn operated within the törl törsn as noted above, while beyond eight generations was törl bišī (non-törl). These same categorical distinctions, xol and örxn operate to bisect the elgn sadn. Thus, naxtsa and zē are örxn, while zēntsēr (2nd degree), xadmūd and xudnr are xol. Interestingly, one informant responded that xadmūd for ego was xol, though for his children's elgn sadn, they were örxn — a further reiteration of the ego-orientation of these units and categorizations.

This picture of the törl törsn as an agnatic ego-oriented unit of individuals within seven degrees of patrilineally-reckoned relationship to ego in ascending, collateral and descending generations, and the picture of the elgn sadn as a more complex, ultimately ego-oriented group composed of several subgroups related by some type of maternal descent or affinity, was developed on the basis of general informant data and the results of a kinship card game which was devised for the explicit purpose of eliciting information on groupings, units, categorizations and their subdivisions. Cards with all of the kin terms were supplied to each informant who was then asked to arrange the cards in terms of those which were felt to 'belong together' or formed a unit or a group. In order to convey the idea of grouping the cards, a conception which it was difficult to convey in Kalmyk, an analogy was first used. Cards for cow, horse, apple, and chicken were shown to the informant who was asked to group them as they belonged together. Cards for cow and horse were shown to belong together in the Kalmyk conceptualization of stock, malmūd. These, in turn, with chicken belonged in the category of animals. Apple was shown not to belong in either category. Then the informant was given the cards with various kin terms and asked to group them.

The author successfully used this method with thirteen subjects ranging in age from twenty-five to seventy years. Two of these subjects were Astrakhan, one of whom was approximately sixty years old, and the other was in his thirties. The remaining subjects were Buzāva, young and old, male and female, old and recent emigrés. The results of the test were supplemented by discussions with the subjects and with other Astrakhan and Buzāva informants for whom the test could not be utilized for lack of literacy or for other reasons.

All of the data obtained from the Astrakhan informants, all of whom were males, pointed to the existence of the törl törsn unit and

the elgn sadn and its subcategories. Synonyms for these units were sometimes used by the informants. Törsn törl was used for törl törsn, and one informant supplied törsn elgn as a synonym. Elgn sadn was the primary referent used for the cognatic unit. One informant stated, with reference to elgn sadn, that 'that means just relationship' (the root torxe means 'born' in Kalmyk). The combination törl sadn was adjudged by most to be an incorrect combination but one informant stated that törl sadn and elgn sadn were synonyms. (This same individual supplied the törsn elgn synonym.) One young Astrakhan informant indicated during one of several interviews that törl and elgn referred to relatives traced agnatically and cognatically. However, during a subsequent interview, he refuted this view. He was never willing to be a subject for the kin card game, perhaps because he prided himself on his knowledge of things Kalmyk and the game might have revealed his ignorance. At any rate, data obtained from him was somewhat inconsistent. The author did have another young Astrakhan informant whose test results and statements were consistent with our analysis.

Data from informants over thirty-five years of age clearly substantiated our analysis. In some cases, though the units were set up, their referents were either not known or, if known, not systematically used. For example, one informant used the terms 'right side of the tree' for the törl törsn and 'left side of the tree' for the elgn sadn. In several instances, the subcategorizations of the elgn sadn were lumped together and labelled 'not of our group' in contrast to 'our group' the törl törsn.

The results and data from male and female Buzāva informants in their late twenties and early thirties first appeared to be somewhat inconsistent. However, when male and female responses were separated, some of the inconsistencies became understandable. Of the two male responses, one coincided with our analysis, while the other seemed to separate affinals from consanguineals, agnate from cognate, and within the latter, senior from junior. Of the female responses, three made the categorizations which corresponded to our divisions. Though the subdivisions of elgn sadn were formed and separated from törl törsn, they were not lumped together in an overall grouping.

In another instance, an informant separated her own nuclear family and her own immediate natal family from a category of törlmūd which included her agnates and cognates. She indicated that family and törl were separate subgroupings which formed one group on a higher level which, in turn, was separated from affinals. The kin game was played a second time with her. The first time she had

conceptualized husband's relatives as a subcategory of törlmūd along with the subcategories of her agnates and then cognates. In discussing both results, she reiterated the separation of husband's relatives. Her first response might have resulted from thinking which reflected her feeling of incorporation into her husband's group. The last female subject saw only one group, distinguishing subcategories only on the basis of close or distant.

In the main, these results substantiate our conclusions about the units, though it is recognized that the responses of younger informants hint at flux and shift in these categorizations at the present time. We must also note the recent broadening in meaning of the various referent terms which has resulted in generalizations in their meaning to the point where they appear to be alternatives in usage, though as yet the categorizations themselves do not appear to have changed in any great degree. As one of the older Astrakhan informants indicated to the author, 'At present, the terms elgn sadn, törl törsn and törl sadn are used interchangeably, though before there was a definite difference between the elgn sadn and törl törsn.' This informant easily arranged the cards producing the categorizations of our analysis and was quite definite about exclusions and inclusions.

It is felt that the evidence advanced by the author as the result of her field work together with the results of the kin card game appear to refute, in part, Adelman's conclusions that the Astrakhan conceptualize the patrilineal unit as törl, separating the other groups of relatives (the subcategories of the elgn sadn); while the Don encompass all of these groups of relatives within törl (1954:102). Our informant data and test results show that the other groups of relatives are not separately grouped by the Astrakhan but are subsumed within the grouping of the elgn sadn, and the distinction between the elgn sadn and the törl törsn is consistently made. Finally, Adelman equates the Buzāva conceptualization of the törl with a bilateral kindred. It appears from some of our results with younger Buzāva and Don Kalmyk informants that changes in the direction of the merging of the elgn sadn and the törl törsn, in all probability resulting from the effects of depopulation, might be taking place. However, results obtained from older informants substantiate our analysis as appropriate for both the Astrakhan and the Buzāva for the period of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The historical sources concerning the background of the social structure present no data on the törl törsn or on the elgn sadn, except for isolated references to the word törl in dictionary or

textual contexts where it is equated with the word 'relative'. It is likely that the törl törsn was the kin unit which formed the xoton (nomadic camp) and within which ego and his family had their basic social relationships.

Beyond the limits of the törl törsn, that is, beyond the seven degrees of patrilineal relationship, individuals patrilineally related are said to fall into the category of the yasn or bone.<sup>6</sup> The yasn unit at present appears to be a named kin unit of the 'sib' type — a type of unit in which descent may or may not be traceable. Many yasn bear the name of an heroic ancestor while others bear the name of the political group from which the ancestor came. All individuals in the yasn are considered to be descended from this heroic ancestor or from an ancestor who was a member of the political group whose name the yasn bears.

Those individuals in one's törl törsn are also neg yastě (one yasn), being members of the same yasn as are all of their descendants. A distinction is made between törl törsn and those who are yasn only by referring to the latter as relatives by yasn — törl bicha (not törl) — using the törl referent for törl törsn only. Sometimes distant relatives within the törl törsn may be referred to as yasn relatives if ego cannot trace the relationship.<sup>7</sup>

Informants indicate that in the past extensive genealogies were kept, but that at present, acknowledgment of yasn membership by reference to the yasn name, which is transmitted patrilineally, assigns one to a particular yasn.<sup>8</sup> Thus, we may say that the yasn is an ancestor-oriented unit which is now, by definition, a sib. It is our hypothesis (on the basis of our analysis to be presented) that in earlier times the yasn was a part of the segmentary lineage system which previously formed the basis for social structure on the steppe.

The author was able to collect the names of seventeen Buzāva yasn and the names of individuals acknowledging membership in these yasn in the United States. Adelman (in a personal communication) has supplied the names of other yasn for whom the author had recorded no members (Figure 10). A list of twenty yasn names was collected from an Astrakhan (Torgüt) informant who indicated that his aimak contained the members of twenty-one different yasn. He also provided other yasn names for the Dörbet and Torgüt (Figure 11). He provided names of members of nine of these yasn in the United States. There was a coincidence of two yasn names for Buzāva and Astrakhan (Torgüt). The informant indicated that these referred to the same yasn. He also noted that in a Torgüt aimak neighboring his own, there were members of other yasn which were the same as

Figure 10. List of Buzāva (Don Kalmyk) Yasn

1. Members in the United States

Budermud	Xošūd
Bagā Burl	Mangud
Tashud	Kuvut Zet
Kherd Degn	Chonsa
Maniat Zet	Zūngar
Kuvude	Borgut
Sharā Merket*	Šara Mongol*
Ho Merket*	Noxā Mongol*
Kered*	

2. No members in the United States

Xar Gakn	Xoit
Kungsud	Xar Merket
Barges	Badrme
Ereketen	Šāv'nēr
Maxcin Keret*	Saxlmuud
Tsadm Keret*	Dilding Tashud*
Natn Keret*	Xo Buxs Tashud*
Zamde	Barūn Tashud*
Baga Tsoxr*	Zūn Tashud*
Ike Tsoxr*	
Xar Bukus	

Figure 11. List of Astrakhan (Torgūt-Dörbet) Yasn<sup>9</sup>

1. Members in the United States

Bul'chin	Tsaatn
Merket	Budvul
Khogchud	Zhebner
Kharnud	Kovunkin
Bogud	

2. No members in the United States

Keered	Ike Xavčīn*
Chipruid	Baga Xavčīn*
Tsevgaxan	Dunde Xavčīn*
Yalxed	Xošūd
Erketen	Keret
Yandek-matsak	Ike Tsoxr*
Xar Bukus	Baga Tsoxr*
Shevner	Bagud
Buyurmud	Ketčner

\* Denotes separate yasn which were originally branches of the same yasn.

among the Dörbet and the Buzāva. One Buzāva informant of the Bagā Borl yasn related that a member of her yasn who comes from the Astrakhan area is here in the United States and that even though he is Astrakhan and she is Buzāva, she feels that 'we should act towards him as a relative'. This would seem to indicate that members of the same yasn might belong to either Dörbet, Torgūt or Buzāva.

The only usage of the term yasn in the historical material is as a referent for the two divisions of the class system — the Tsagan Yasn, the White Bone or nobility, and the Xara Yasn, the Black Bone or commoners. The author has found only one reference to the yasn as a kin unit, in the sense of its present usage, in the voluminous materials examined both here and in the U.S.S.R.<sup>10</sup> This seemed quite strange in view of the antiquity of the unit, according to informants.

In an effort to find a solution to the background of the yasn, the author began by taking the proper names of the yasn recorded for both Buzāva (Don Kalmyk) and Astrakhan (Dörbet and Torgūt) and tracing them in the historical literature. Our search revealed the following: Pallas (1776) is one of the few who has recorded the proper names of units other than tribes, and he lists the names of the otok (otoq) comprising the Dörbet and Torgūt tribes. Many otok names coincide with the names of present-day yasn. (Figures 1, 10, 11). We must also recall that this is the only instance in the early sources where there is a possible implication that administrative units above the level of the xoton were kin determined — the relationship between several sets of otok being couched in kin terms (see page 30). Furthermore, the reorganization and realignment of the ulus which remained after the exodus of 1771 left the otok or rod, as they were beginning to be called in the early part of the nineteenth century, sometimes subsumed under more than one ulus. Examination of the rod (otok) names listed by Nebol'sin (Figure 12) and other nineteenth century authors (Figure 13) again shows a concurrence with many names recorded for the yasn of today. This coincidence of names seems to lend support to the hypothesis that the yasn unit had its antecedents in the rod which in earlier times had been known as the otok.

The author then sought informant evidence regarding the antecedents of the yasn and the possible relationship between it and the otok. Attempts were made to elicit data from our informants concerning possible prior referents for the yasn unit. Buzāva informants who were questioned about antecedent names for the yasn were unable to provide any data on the subject, although they said that the yasn was a unit of great historical depth which predated

the Buzāva move to the Don — consequently, the concurrence of Buzāva and Astrakhan yasn. We note that after the Buzāva moved away from the main group, ulus cotn and xoton were the only operative units in the political structure and no information is presented concerning their kin or non-kin basis. Thus, if the yasn is, in reality, the otok, then beginning in the nineteenth century it was a unit rather than a grouping among the Buzāva.

The author explored the problem of relationship between angi (rod), otok and yasn with the Astrakhan informant who had earlier provided the yasn names. The informant states that within his ulus, The Erketenski ulus, there were twenty-one angi (rod) which formerly had been called otok. The people of these angi were interspersed among various aimaks. The names of the angi or otok exactly duplicated the list of Torgūt yasn which he had given to the author several months earlier. The author pointed out this coincidence to him, and he indicated that angi (rod) or otok were identical with yasn, that all three terms referred to the same unit.

This identification by the informant, added to the supporting historical evidence; coupled with the absence of contrary evidence, seems to point to the conclusion that the yasn of today is in all probability the unit referred to in the past as angi (rod) and subsequently as otok. The author's exhaustive research in the Kalmyk historical materials in the United States and in the libraries and archives of the U.S.S.R. has revealed no other data relating to the question of the Kalmyk yasn.<sup>11</sup>

The reasons for the shift to the yasn referent for the otok, if such occurred, are not ascertainable either from the historical data or from informants. It is also possible that the term yasn existed concurrently with otok/angi in that the latter was the official or bureaucratic usage and only it was recorded. The data supplied by our Astrakhan and Buzāva informants supports the belief that the association of the term and the unit relates back to antiquity. Although we have no literary historical data to support this early association, we recognize that the term yasn as a referent for 'class' has an immemorial usage and that the concept of descent through the male line which is referred to as 'kin in bone' is also said to be ancient among the Kalmyks as well as among other Mongol groups (Leontovich 1880: 330, Pallas 1776 I:24).

The concepts developed by Kotwicz concerning the 'bone' and the 'clan' might possibly serve to illuminate this problem (1949). He sees the most fundamental units which comprise the social structure of the steppe as being the bone and the clan. Both are seen as

Figure 12. List of rod in Khoshūt Ulus (Nebol'sin 1852)  
(Recording Nebol'sin's spelling as transliterated from the Cyrillic)

- |                 |                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Keret:       | in origin, members of Torgūt tribe |
| 2. Erketen:     | Torgūt in origin                   |
| 3. Baga Khoshūt |                                    |
| Sub-group:      | Khatamshe                          |
| 4. Urankhus:    | Djungarian                         |
| Sub-groups:     | Urankhus Proper                    |
|                 | Davliut                            |
| 5. Telengut:    | Djungarian                         |
| 6. Tsaatyn      |                                    |
| 7. Ike Xoshūt   |                                    |
| Sub-groups:     | Ike Xoshūt                         |
|                 | Giuviunchun-Shabiner               |
| 8. Shabiner     |                                    |
| Sub-groups:     | Khazlai                            |
|                 | Choedjan-Shabiner                  |
| 9. Xoit         |                                    |
| Sub-groups:     | Xoit                               |
|                 | Khakhachun                         |
|                 | (Torgūt)                           |
| 10. Tsagala     |                                    |

Nebol'sin notes the following names of the rod in Ike-tsokhurob: Ulus: Achinir, Khoshut, Tokhan-Kiuciuk, Djungar, Boortsugut, Satkhyl, Shabiner, Ereketen, El'dzhychym, Zamut and others; for Iandikovski: Keret, Shabiner, Tsaatyn, Bachut, Barun, etc.; in Erketenevski Ulus: Kharnut, Khapchin, Erekhut, Xo-Merket, etc.



Figure 13. Proper names of units recorded in the literature.  
(Recording each author's spelling as transliterated from the Cyrillic)

Biuler (1846 v. 49:20, 24)  
Gurbun-Zur  
Barun  
Keret  
Chonsa

©

Dubrov (1898:48) Groups (rod) among the Ike Dörbet of Stavropol', recorded with population and land area

Baga Burul  
Kiuvet  
Biudurmus  
Abraner  
Tsaras  
Shiret  
Torochiner  
Ikechunus  
Budul'chener  
Khavzhinkun  
Baratuktun — First and Second

Farforovski (1909:208) 'Rod (aimak) groups of the Ike Dörbet Ulus,' recorded with population figures

Iketuktun — First  
Biudermús  
Kiuvet  
Bagaburl  
Abranet  
Khavzhunkun  
Baratyktyn — First  
Baratyktyn — Second  
Budlu'chiner  
Iketyktyn — Second  
Ikechinos  
Tsaros — Sheret — Taranchiner

being of the same order but they are clearly distinguished by the nomads and carry distinct names. Kotwicz indicates that 'when one questions a nomad on his origin, he answers that he belongs to such and such bone and such and such clan' (1949:160). He cites an example from the Secret History of the Mongols. He defines the bone as a unit whose members have a common ancestry, while the clan is an organization 'larger and freer' whose basis is in social, political and economic relations. The bone is a closed agnatic group whose limits are well-defined, while the clan is easily transformed and may disappear (Kotwicz 1949:161). These two units 'interpenetrate each other, one finds parts of the same bone in different clans'. 'But in general, the problem of the relation between the bone and the clan remains still unsolvable' (Kotwicz 1949:161). From this brief description, one may see the apparent similarities between the bone described by Kotwicz and the yasn of the Kalmyks.

In the early 1900's, according to Astrakhan informants, the otok-angi-yasn unit was no longer functioning as part of the political structure as it had in earlier periods. The law of 1892 indicates that the political structure at that time consisted only of the ulus, aimak and xoton. No basis of kinship for the aimak or the xoton appears in extracts from the statutes. Moreover, our Astrakhan informant stated that even at the level of the xoton relatives and non-relatives lived side by side.<sup>12</sup> However, it seems that a tenuous sense of kinship continued to pervade the otok-angi-yasn unit even though most of the specific relationships might no longer have been traceable in fact it was still reckoned as the exogamic unit by some. Why it survived at this particular level is presently unanswerable, again because of a complete lack of historical information.

In the years after the Revolution, the yasn as a category of relatives among the Astrakhan seems to have been virtually inoperative. In fact, several young Astrakhan informants, when questioned about their yasn membership, denied the existence of the yasn. One indicated that after seven generations the individuals were no longer members of the same kin unit. One admitted that yasn may have existed but that he was never told about his yasn. However, older Astrakhan informants were able to give their yasn names and the names of other Astrakhan yasn. Nevertheless, it is clear that recognition of the yasn as a unit appeared in some instances to be dying out.

However, the yasn functions as a unit — and not as a group — in the contemporary Kalmyk social unit in the United States. We

have not as yet considered the functions of the other two units delineated above, namely, the törl törsn and the elgn sadn, because these three units may be analyzed more clearly if viewed in relation to one another. As units they represent successively more distant categories of individuals with whom ego and his family can maintain important social relationships.

As was shown in our chapter on Tsagan Sar, if particular individuals and their nuclear families have no persons in the category of törl törsn — with whom they traditionally maintained close relationships — then elgn sadn relatives will fill the positions of 'close relationship' and they will act toward them accordingly. If there are no relatives in the category of törl törsn or elgn sadn, then yasn relatives move into the positions of 'close relationship'. As one informant put it, 'If one has no relatives through father (törl törsn), then mother's relatives (elgn sadn) become important; if none of these, then yasn relatives, if available, become important.' The Tsagan cycles of visits indicate the way in which the various constituent categories of these units are also scaled as the units themselves in terms of distance from ego and his immediate family. We saw in the Tsagan material that in the absence of individuals in those categories ideally considered close, individuals from more distant categories are moved up to fill the positions of close relationship. Thus, some individuals may maintain close ties with yasn-mates if they have few or no actual relatives in the categories of törl törsn or elgn sadn, while others with many actual available relatives maintain loose or more casual ties.

In our analysis of the rites and ceremonies involved in marriage we saw that on such occasions ad hoc assemblages consisting of individuals from these units on both the bride's and groom's side came together. At this time, it is customary to invite many guests; in fact, informants state, 'everybody (meaning all Kalmyks) is invited'. As was seen in Chapter VI, the ceremonial posture or the structural pose within the various rites constituting this rite de passage is in terms of the girl's side and the boy's side. This series of ceremonies provides an occasion for the coming together of relatives of the bride and the groom, and as previously noted, those individuals closely related to either side are most involved in the rite and ceremonies and the preparations; the closer the relationship, the greater the participation.

The oldest individual belonging to the girl's (father's) yasn is usually present on the day of the wedding and is accorded special deference. Within the membership of the yasn unit, there is always a recognition that one particular individual is the most senior in

terms of age. He is accorded special respect on the various ceremonial occasions when individuals belonging to the yasn come together. At a Gal tjalg'n or fire ritual ceremony, another occasion for an ad hoc assemblage composed of individuals from these units, the senior member of the yasn to which the male head of the family sponsoring the ceremony belongs is accorded the honor of being served first and separately from the other older male guests. When the senior member dies, the next most senior individual in age of that yasn is so recognized and deferred to. Since the yasn is a unit or category and not a group, there appear to be no other particular functions, duties or rights accruing to this senior individual other than respect and formal deference. Borisov for example in his discussion of the rod notes that the eldest in the rod was accorded special honor and respect and that vodka could not be drunk at weddings unless he was present (1926:23).

There is one further function assigned to these yasn unit by many informants which has been referred to in the previous chapter. In a determination of the permissability of a marriage, the yasn functions as an exogamic unit according to some informants. There are, at present, however, marriages occasionally between individuals of the same yasn 'if the relationship is not traceable and they are of different aimak' — the latter insuring sufficient genealogical distance. Though informants say that 'before there could be no marriage between people of the same yasn,' there are several marriage within the senior generation in which individuals were of the same yasn. An alternative mode of reckoning the exogamic limit provided by other informants is in terms of more than seven degrees of removal from a common ancestor; in other words, individuals beyond the limits of the törl törsn for ego. As was noted above, the exogamic limit established for cognatic relatives coincides with the limits of one's elgn sadn.

In addition to these three units, there is a fourth social unit, the aimak. Historically, the aimak was part of a political structure which in the distant past was probably kin-determined, but which appears to have lost that distinction by the middle of the 19th century. Elderly informants, both Astrakhan and Buzāva, indicate that in their youth the aimak was a district, a particular territory. But Aberle, in discussing the Astrakhan, indicates that the aimak 'was apparently made up of people who ranged the same large grazing area . . . however, it was not simply a matter of residing in a particular district or on a piece of land but rather a matter of belonging to a particular aimak viewed as a social unit, not a

geographical one' (1953:8). This concept of membership in the aimak is also applicable to the more settled Buzáva for aimak affiliation continued to be transmitted patrilineally among the 'old emigrés' during their sojourn in Eastern Europe and continues to be remembered and to be operative among the Kalmyks in America today.

In the United States, the aimak has come to provide still another unit of individuals with whom ego may interact and for whom ego 'has respect', transforming it into a kind of quasi-kin category. Individuals who have no relatives in any of the other three categories 'like to be relatives through aimak'. It is then conceived of as a close relationship for ceremonial purposes and for mutual assistance. It is an additional category which may be used to provide close relations if no individuals occupy the other three categories for a particular ego. One informant noted as follows: 'If one has no relative through father, mother's relatives become important; if not any of these, then yasn relatives become important and if none of these, then aimak relatives are important'.

There are, therefore, three kin units and one quasi-kin unit, each seen as successively more distant in relationship to ego. They are categories representing successive degrees of kin distance from ego and from which, depending on the actual spread of ego's kin, come the individuals with whom ego maintains close and important social relationships of a ceremonial, ritual and mutual assistance nature. They also provide the categories from which are formed the ad hoc assemblages on such occasions as weddings and funerals.

The system is able to perpetuate itself because of the egocentricity of the two basic units, the törl törsn and the elgn sadn, and the present operation of the yasn and aimak units as further categories from which ego can draw individuals to become 'close relations' and to operate as such in the sphere of life. These categories are conceptualized as categories of relatives and reflect the importance of relatives and kin relations. In fact, many instances were cited by informants who, not having actual individuals in any of these four categories, 'invented a kind of relationship'. An instance is given of an old lady emigré living in Serbia who, not remembering her yasn, said that she was of the Mangud yasn, since there were some people of that yasn in Serbia. After the war, she encountered some of her relatives in the displaced persons camp who knew that she was of Kuvut Zet yasn as were they. 'Now they say both yasn for they are not sure'. Another instance of the importance of relations was seen in the lady who had no relatives here and was very unhappy

until she found out through letters from relatives in Russia about her yasn affiliation. Now she is happy for she interacts with those here of the same yasn affiliation — now 'she has relatives'. Having no relatives is deemed 'unfortunate'. One should have relatives for relatives look out for one another.

Categories beyond these four, for example, the tribe, may assume from the behavioral standpoint the position of quasi-kin units in particular cases. One Buzāva informant whose husband is Dörbet indicated that on Tsagan he makes formal visits to Dörbet and also to Torgūt 'for respect' because her children are Dörbet and her husband has no individuals in any category with whom to interact, except two men of the same aimak. In fact, the various Astrakhan families, in a sense, act as a single group of relatives because none of them have more than two or three actual relatives. This was evidenced in their annual visiting during Tsagan and as described in the previous chapter at the recent wedding of a young Astrakhan man at which the group participated as his close relatives.

Blood brotherhood is yet another way of creating a close patrilineal relationship.

The single formal type of organization or 'group' in our usage are the societies which support the temples whose operation we have discussed in Chapter IV. One society is Astrakhan, while the other two are Don. The membership of each of the Don societies consists primarily of individuals of each of the two aimaks which have the greatest number of individuals in the group. According to one informant, aimak affiliation was important as a factor of allegiance at the time of the Kalmyks' arrival in the United States and as it had been important in Yugoslavia among the emigrés where it was used as a means of furthering the political ambitions of particular people. In the United States, it resulted in the formation of the two Don Kalmyk Societies formed more or less along aimak lines.

Mrs. L. Victorova has collected fragmentary data on the social organization of the Kalmyk Mongols in the Soviet Union today (Personal Communication). This material appears to indicate that some of the terms and groupings such as yasn and torl which we have shown to be operative among the Kalmyk Mongols in the United States are still remembered by some Kalmyk Mongols in the Soviet Union. However, they no longer appear operative for any particular function, presumably as a result of, among other factors, the extensive efforts of the Soviet government to break up large-scale kin units.

We have examined the various categories which compose the present-day Kalmyk social unit in the United States. We have seen

the importance of the törl törsn, elgn sadn, yasn and aimak as categories of individuals in successively more distant kin relation to ego and from which ego may draw individuals with whom to interact in the various phases of the Kalmyk sphere of life. We recognize that the törl törsn, although not historically documented, seems likely to have been the unit from which the xoton was formed and within which ego and his family had their primary social relationships. The elgn sadn, also lacking historical documentation, probably existed and functioned as it does today as a category of relatives of subsidiary importance. The category of yasn, in all probability the unit referred to as otok (angi) was previously part of the political structure. Even after losing its political function, the identity of the unit and its basis of kin feeling persisted — more strongly among the Buzāva — to emerge in the present social unit as another more distant category from which ego can draw individuals for interaction in social relationships.

The continuing importance of kinship as a means of establishing social relationships and the persistence of the structure characterized by successively more distant categories of relatives which act as reservoirs of individuals with whom ego can relate in order to maintain his own system of relationships within the larger Kalmyk unit has been one of the factors enabling the present Kalmyk social unit to maintain its cohesiveness.

## NOTES

1. See Chapters 2 and 3 for a more detailed discussion of the historical background of Kalmyk social structure.

2. These terms are also consistent with those recorded by the author from an eighteenth century manuscript in the Archives of the Academy of Science in Leningrad — Slovar Buriat Mongolo-Kalmitskii.

3. Aberle records terms for up to four degrees of descent. He regards the term he collected for the fifth degree as being dubious. The author obtained from an elderly informant, spontaneously, this very same term for the fifth degree and another for the sixth degree of descent. The informant indicated the existence of a seventh-degree term which she could not recall. (Figure 9)

4. The term kindred, alone or modified by an adjective, is not considered appropriate by the author for this unit or the ego-oriented unit to be described below in view of that term's cognatic connotation.

5. According to Aberle, the elgn sadn was said to include one's own patrilineal relatives and this all-inclusive unit was said to be referred to by the Buzāva as törl (1953:11). The results of the author's field investigation, including a type of kinship test, to be analyzed below, showed a consistent distinction between törl törsn, 'blood relatives,' agnates and elgn sadn, non-agnatic relatives for both Astrakhan and most Buzāva informants, even where the informants had no knowledge of the terminological referents used for these units.

6. Yasn or bone is the referent for an important concept and categorization in Central Asian social structure. Here, we shall deal primarily with its importance and meaning for the Kalmyks in the United States today.

7. Married females present the same problem in terms of incorporation into their husband's yasn as in the törl törsn. If one asks a married woman for the name of her yasn or the yasn to which she belongs, the response is consistently her natal yasn, although, behaviorally, these women may be incorporated into their husband's yasn. For example, instances were cited of families visiting the wives of deceased yasn mates during Tsagan.

8. The author had access to a genealogical record tracing back only seven generations. It was recorded by a Buzāva man several years ago just prior to his death and was shown to the author by his son. Beyond the seventh generation, a dotted line connected to the name of the ancestor of his yasn.



9. These spellings are transliterations from the informant's Cyrillic.

10. This reference is in Trailin (1872:17), and is as follows: 'relatives by male line ... descendants of one ancestor in Kalmyk Yasuna (bone) whether by 10, 50, 100 and so forth removals'. This statement, in effect, does not indicate the existence of a kin unit called yasn, but it does indicate that kin relationship through males is so designated.

11. The only known sources not examined were the archives in Elista, the capital of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, which was not accessible to the author.

12. It is noteworthy to recall at this point, the bit of evidence presented by Leontovich in his discussion of the Code of 1822, that members of the same aimak were referred to as 'neighbors', while members of the same otok or rod were referred to as 'of the same blood'.

## CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages, we have examined the Kalmyk Mongol group in the United States in terms of both its historical antecedents and its present way of life. We shall now reiterate the questions posed at the beginning of our investigation in order to summarize the conclusions to be drawn from the study. Following this, we shall set this data within the broader context of conclusions reached by other studies which have been concerned with problems similar to those which we have considered.

What is the nature of the Kalmyks' present adjustment? The Kalmyk Mongols in the United States form, as we have seen, a viable social unit, internally cohesive and one which continues to maintain itself as such. At present, the unit maintains its separateness as demonstrated by the low rate of social interaction with non-members in spheres of life other than economic and politico-administrative and by the low rate of marriage outside the unit, which is largely endogamous. Social ties of individuals are, by and large, intra-unit and are ordered in ways distinctively Kalmyk.

There is a continued maintenance of self-identity as Kalmyk which is often verbally expressed in terms such as 'people of our Kalmyk nation' or 'we Kalmyks'. Individuals in the group perceive it as remaining intact; 'if a few move off, they are still reckoned as members of the group'. Their Kalmyk identity is sustained by, among other factors, their continued participation in the various traditional rites and ceremonies; their continued adherence to many other traditional practices and the conscious effort to maintain Kalmyk as a language for the group by teaching it to their children. The young people continue to participate in traditional rites and ceremonies and evidence knowledge of custom and tradition by their criticism when certain procedures are not followed. The formation of the Society for the Preservation of Kalmyk Culture by those more intellectually inclined also constitutes evidence of the desire to maintain Kalmyk identity. Though this group's active membership is quite small, it does receive the verbal support, and, from time to time, the monetary support of the rest of the group. Even features from prior host cultures which have since been incorporated into the Kalmyk cultural heritage are drawn upon to express Kalmyk

identity. The several songs and dances from Eastern Europe are an example of this type of incorporation.<sup>1</sup>

When the traditional way of life of the Kalmyk Mongols is compared with that of the contemporary way of life of the remnant group in the United States, we see that cultural retentions have been concentrated in certain areas and that new traits appear to have been readily adopted only in certain other areas. One major sphere of retention is that of religion. Although some of the ceremonies have been dropped and others simplified to some degree, those deemed most important in the past — Tsagan Sar, Urus, Zul and Gal Tjal'gan — continue to be celebrated today. Moreover, temple ceremonies are well attended, and although the clerical estate continues only in an attenuated form, the relationships between laymen and clergy and the functions each traditionally fulfilled appear to be sustained. The threat of extinction of the clerical estate through death is being checked at present by the importation of Lamaist Buddhist priests from India, but just how long this can continue is an open question.

Another area of retention is that of language. Kalmyk Mongol continues to be the language spoken in the home as well as the language most frequently utilized when Kalmyks meet one another. Children learn it as their first language. Linguistic usages have changed to some degree in that there has been an infusion of Russian words and linguistic forms, particularly in the speech of the Buzāva. Russian and English are the important secondary languages.

Knowledge of the Kalmyk's literary heritage has been preserved to some degree only among a few intellectuals, though all Kalmyks know of the existence of Djangar — their heroic epic. There are also several members of the most senior generation who know the traditional Kalmyk folktales. However, this knowledge is being lost as these people die.

Retentions in various degrees in the areas of diet — the continuing emphasis on meat and milk products, child rearing, and medical practices — have also been documented.

Several basic values may also be seen as having a continuity with the past. The Kalmyk concept of erjalg'x (wishing a person well, paying respect, showing respect) and all that it embodies in maintaining social relationships and symbolizing their existence within the context of various rites and ceremonies is an element of continuing importance in the present. The strong respect relationship between junior and senior also continues to be maintained. The virtue of hospitality which was such an important element in steppe life is still characteristic of the Kalmyks today.

The historical materials have provided a picture of the social structure of a nomadic pastoral society which, in the distant past, was undoubtedly of the segmentary lineage type and in which 'patrilineal kinship was the nexus of social life' (Krader 1963:320). However, through time, the expansion of political power and functions soon outpaced the kinship structure. A tightening of the political structure from the top, together with the later support of the Russian government in order to maintain stability, resulted in the development of several types of non-kin political units and decrease in the importance of kinship as a basis for the successively more inclusive political units until it became a mere fiction or lost its significance entirely in the units of greatest magnitude. Nevertheless, the importance of relating by kinship; that is, the maintenance of social relationships almost entirely on the basis of kinship, did not disappear. Our study of the social structure characteristic of the Kalmyk Mongols in the United States today has shown that their patterns of social interaction are still largely kin determined. The 'widely extended system of kinship relationships which are characteristic of primitive tribes' did not cease to exist as the Kalmyks moved into the arena of the modern world (Gluckman 1959:251). Furthermore, accommodations have been and are being made in order to preserve the 'web of kinship'. We saw that the principle of ego-orientation, operating within the social structure, enables this system of social relationships to be preserved despite gaps in the actual range of relations surrounding particular persons and their families. As our analyses in the chapters on Tsagan Sar and marriage showed, adjustments were continually being made in these spheres of social relationships by utilizing individuals in successively more distant categories of kin relationship to fill positions of close relationship in order to maintain the system.

The celebration of Tsagan Sar still constitutes the focal point of the year. Its important elements of visiting and gift exchange annually serve to bind, renew, reinforce and reiterate the important social relationships for the constituent families and individuals of the group. These relationships are also reiterated and renewed on the other occasions which require that respect be shown, namely, birth, marriage and changing residence.

The main areas of cultural change for the Kalmyks have been in the realm of economy and technology — the realm of material objects. Housing, furnishings, clothing and the mode of transportation are, of course, the most obvious. The basic changes in the mode of livelihood which were begun even before the Revolution have continued. The realm of material objects seems to be an area

where there is ready and eager adoption of new traits. However, some of these new material traits often relate in particular ways to the past as, for example, the equation of the horse to the car in wedding ceremonies. In the past, the color of the horse upon which the bride would ride to her new home was astrologically determined by the priest; now it is the color of the car that is important. This substitution of new material traits for older ones within traditional cultural patterns is an important characteristic of Kalmyk change and continuity as our descriptions of the Tsagan Sar celebration and the institution of marriage amply demonstrated.

The traditional politico-administrative structure is no longer relevant to the present social unit whose members are completely integrated as citizens and residents into the politico-administrative structure of the host society in the same way as they are integrated into its economic structure. Thus, in these two broad areas — political and economic — they have in a sense lowered socio-cultural boundaries to interact with the outside in order to maintain their own system.<sup>2</sup> This is a central feature of Kalmyk adaptation as well as an important element in understanding the factors involved in the maintenance and persistence of the group and its Kalmyk identity discussed below.

The second and more difficult question posed at the onset of our investigation concerned the discovery, if possible, of those factors which appear to be involved in the maintenance by this group of its separateness and its persistence as a separable social unit despite continual impacts from other cultures in the course of movement through different cultural milieus and major changes of culture content in certain areas of life which in other situations appear to have caused disorganization and disintegration. Among the factors which appear to support the persistence of the Kalmyk Mongol group in the United States as a separate internally cohesive unit are, in our opinion, the following: their settlement as a group, their small number — small enough to be considered a primary group, their endogamy and their continued maintenance of networks of social relationship which are characteristically Kalmyk and which are periodically and formally renewed and reiterated within a ceremonial context which is also still largely Kalmyk. The social structure, based on kinship on this more immediate level of primary group relations, was sufficiently flexible to accommodate the multiplicity of new situations.

The substitution, amalgamation and accommodation in the realm of culture content, enabling many of the basic cultural patterns to be maintained constitutes still another factor. The persistence of

social structural elements despite the fact that the cultural mode of their expression has in many instances shifted may be cited as another important factor.<sup>3</sup> Selectivity in boundary-maintaining mechanisms is yet another factor. The reconstitution of their religious and ceremonial life after their settlement in the United States is one more factor which has sustained Kalmyk identity and group cohesiveness. In fact, subjectively, some Kalmyks see the continuity of their religious and ceremonial traditions as related to and providing for the continuity of the group and its way of life.

Still another factor involved is the importance of and value placed on social relationships with other Kalmyks at the expense of relationships with non-Kalmyks. Individuals in a whole range of contexts continually reiterated to the author the feeling, desire and need to be with other Kalmyks and to interrelate and maintain contacts with other Kalmyks. Whenever Kalmyks visit in the Midwest or on the West coast, they will consciously seek out the one or two Kalmyks who, for one reason or another, have moved away from the main areas of concentration. Those few Kalmyks who have been able to travel to Europe feel it an absolute necessity to visit their compatriots in Paris or Munich who are usually 'distant relatives of some kind', these visits being the occasions for extensive celebrating. Contacts are maintained with these 'relatives' in Europe as well as with relatives in the Soviet Union by mail.

Let us now place our own conclusions regarding the Kalmyks within the wider context of other studies pertinent to our subject of inquiry. These studies, sociological and anthropological, date within the past decade and are concerned with such subjects as ethnic identity, ethnic group persistence and the mechanisms involved in assimilation.

Firstly, there appears to be a general correlation between group settlement — either settlement as a group at one time or chain group settlement — and ethnic group persistence (Horobin 1957), Eisenstadt 1951 a, Price 1959, Hehenthal 1955). These groups 'form an island of familiarity in a sea of alien culture' (Horobin 1957:252), a mainstay during the period of dislocation and a center of the most continuous and effective social relations and the basis of social identity (Eisenstadt 1951 b:223). Examples of such group settlements which have continued to persist as separate ethnic entities for varying lengths of time are the Hutterite, Amish, Mennonite, East Indians in Trinidad, the Indians who have emigrated to Great Britain in recent years and, as our study has revealed, the Kalmyk Mongols in the United States.

Other recent studies present conclusions relating to the internal characteristics and structure of ethnic groups. Breton's study of ethnic groups in Canada revealed that institutional completeness appears to correlate positively with the maintenance of a high percentage of social ties within the group (1960, 1964). From these institutions maintained exclusively within the group originate much of its social life and in-group sentiments (Breton 1964:197).

Maintenance of separateness also correlates with the presence of social interaction patterns characteristic of the group as an in-group. Endogamy and the resulting common descent are also correlates of separateness (Hohenthal 1955, Crumrine 1964:22, Francis 1948:106). Apparently, the more different the attributes which set the group apart from its host, i.e., language, race, religion, history and a body of culture patterns, the easier the development, continued maintenance or re-creation of separate institutions and maintenance of separate identity (Breton 1964:204). The Kalmyk data supports these correlations in all respects.

Another major area of investigation has involved the question of that which persists and, equally important, that which must persist in order to maintain the separateness of an ethnic group. Are there essential retentions or a core of patterns which must be maintained in order for the ethnic group to persist? The data relative to these questions comes primarily from studies of groups undergoing acculturation as a result of culture contact in their original environments. Though we recognize that this type of culture change is not commensurate in every detail with that characteristic of the immigrant ethnic group, basically, the two types of phenomena have much in common, and may in the future be set within a single, all-encompassing theoretical framework concerned with culture change and process.

It appears that with regard to the minimum requirements for persistence, groups can persist as separate entities despite changes in language, economy, dress and diet (Price 1959:286). However, groups which have successfully maintained separateness usually participate primarily in the political, economic, technological and educational institutions of the host culture (Eaton 1952:333, Francis 1948:106). Studies have further revealed that traits, patterns and complexes in certain spheres of life appear to have more durability than in other spheres of life. Acceptance of material items appears to proceed much faster than in the realm of beliefs, values and ideas (Libby 1960:301). Frequently, there is change in content but continued maintenance of a broad cultural pattern, with the new content

being fitted into the old pattern (Crumrine 1964:42). We have seen these points reiterated many times over in our Kalmyk Mongol data.

The realm of religious institutions appears to have focal importance in the preservation of ethnic groups. 'Groups based in part on religious beliefs have greater survival value than groups which are essentially ethnic, religion reinforces ethnicity [sic]' (Price 1959: 285). In long-persisting ethnic groups such as the Hutterites and the Amish, religious activities play a dominant role as the center of numerous activities. We have seen this to be true of the Kalmyks as well. Frequently, there is a focal religious ceremony which not only provides continuity with the past but also affirms and reiterates the symbol system which comprises ethnic identity for the individuals in the group (Howard 1961:28, Hohenthal 1955:293, Crumrine 1964:4). The institution of Tsagan Sar clearly fulfills these functions for the Kalmyks.

Social structural patterns appear to be more resistant to change and more amenable to accommodation and reconstitution. This has been demonstrated in the study of the East Indians in Trinidad by Klass (1961) and Freilich's study of the Iroquois (1958) and reiterated in our study of the Kalmyks.

The question of that which constitutes ethnic identity as frequently discussed in the acculturation literature and elsewhere obviously has pertinence to the study of ethnic groups which are the results of immigration. In addition, the concept of ethnic identity is relevant to the general sphere of phenomena concerned with the interrelations between different socio-cultural groups in a variety of circumstances. The very maintenance of the ethnic group may be said to be coincident with the maintenance of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity has been defined as 'those mechanisms by which individuals recognize members of their own or another social group and by which they recognize persons sharing or not sharing a cultural or symbol system' (Crumrine 1964:3). These mechanisms include, among others, the belief in uniqueness, a feeling of difference, a subjective view of themselves as a distinctive ethnic and cultural entity even when objectively — as in the case of the Chukchi — their cultural patterns are not unique (Libby 1960:301). The presence of a body of distinctive traits, particularly language, and a unique symbol system signifying ethnic identity are the other mechanisms cited (Crumrine 1964). The symbols may be material or non-material elements which are not necessarily unique but which become 'sacred symbols and a part of the unified system of belief which signifies ethnic identity (Crumrine 1964:8). The symbol system will also include a term denoting the group.



It is not surprising that these mechanisms, by which ethnicity is defined, coincide with many of the factors which our earlier discussion suggested were important in the persistence of the group and the maintenance of its separate ethnic identity. Moreover, the substantive data on ethnic groups, including the Kalmyk Mongols, also supports, in general, the importance of these factors.

In some cases, the factors that denote ethnic identity may change through time without changing the intrinsic nature or identity of the groups. This point is made by Francis in his study of the Mennonites, a group originally identified primarily on a religious basis but whose identity in time shifted to one based upon language and homogeneity of customs as well (1948). The Kalmyk use of traits incorporated from other cultures as signifiers of identity represents this type of shift.

Crumrine suggests the possibility that ethnic identity can be conceived of in terms of degrees of intensity. He sees the degree of intensity of ethnic identity as being related to the operation of two criteria: the number, importance and consistency of shared beliefs and the amount of time spent in group social interaction; thus, the more numerous the beliefs shared, the more time spent in group interaction and the more intense the ethnic identity. If we relate this conception of ethnic identity, in turn, to the maintenance or persistence of ethnic groups, we may then talk about differences in degree of persistence, but more properly, perhaps, in terms of different types or forms of persisting ethnic groups based on and related to the variations in the criteria involved.

Crumrine has, in fact, formulated a fourfold typology based upon the permutation of these two criteria. Type I is characterized by a high sharing of cultural belief and a high degree of social participation as exemplified by the Mayo and by the Kalmyks, among others. Type II is characterized by a low sharing of cultural belief and a low degree of social participation. Type III is characterized by a low sharing of cultural belief and a high degree of social participation as exemplified by the Yankee City minority groups. Type IV is characterized by a low sharing of cultural belief and such a low degree of social participation that loss of ethnic identity results and the consequent absorption of the group. This typology can be said to constitute a useful preliminary formulation in the hitherto relatively unexplored field of the comparative study of ethnic groups.

What data do these studies of assimilation, absorption and accommodation offer us concerning ethnicity and persistence? Assimilation refers to absorption by the host society so that the former ethnic group and its host come to share the same frame of reference

as a result of social interaction (Taft 1953:49). This is also sometimes referred to in the literature as adaptation. Eisenstadt, in his study of the absorption of immigrants in Israel, has shown that there are three factors involved in assimilation: a predisposition to change, the use and knowledge of the host's language, and the factor of establishing personal, primary ties with individuals in the host group (1951 b). We can see that individuals within the ethnic groups which are characterized by the factors involved in persistence and maintenance of ethnic units will not be predisposed to assimilation as defined in Eisenstadt's terms.

Recently, within the context of problem-oriented studies of situations where complete assimilation of immigrants is consciously desired and is a part of public policy (Australia), the concept of pluralistic assimilation has been developed (Taft 1953:46). This concept refers to the situation where complete absorption has not taken place; the immigrant group and the host continue as part of the same larger community, the former preserving its differences and its own cultural patterns while maintaining only some shared frames of reference with the host society.

This is, in effect, cultural pluralism — a concept which has been developed within the context of Caribbean and Southeast Asian studies. In such a context, ethnic groups are accepted as separate and more or less permanent entities. These ethnic groups may or may not operate on an equal basis with the ethnic group or groups constituting the host society. In those cases where a superiority-inferiority relationship characterizes such intergroup relationship, we have ethnic groups which are usually characterized as minority groups. There is a school of thought which sees ethnic groups in general as being synonymous with minority groups, and thus defines them in terms of subjection to disabilities in the form of prejudice at the hands of the majority (Wagley and Harris 1958). The disabilities of the minority, in turn, are related to the characteristics shared by the minority of which the majority disapproves. However, we can certainly see from our review of the data concerning ethnic groups that those groups which can be defined as minority groups form but one sub-type of a larger category. Certainly, all ethnic groups are not defined primarily in terms of prejudice, discrimination and the struggle for power.

This larger category — the ethnic group — as is evident, has been investigated primarily in specific substantive terms. Our own study of the Kalmyk Mongols in the United States is one of several studies of ethnic groups which have persisted and continued to be maintained as separate entities within the context of a host society.

We have oriented our own study so that from our examination of the extensive Kalmyk data we have been able to draw conclusions concerning the factors which appear to be involved in the maintenance and persistence of the Kalmyk group and its identity. In addition, we have attempted a brief assessment of the current literature concerning ethnic groups and ethnic persistence in an effort to suggest the outlines of a general theoretical framework within which the Kalmyk data as well as other ethnic materials may be set. It is hoped that before long a comparative study of ethnic groups and ethnic persistence will be undertaken; one which will take into account the various pertinent factors that our preliminary exploration has revealed.

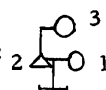
## NOTES

1. Adelman has also recognized this as a characteristic feature of the Kalmyk identity (1960:54).

2. Adelman also reiterates this point noting that 'they have a ... propensity under conditions of need to lower cultural boundaries ... the Kalmyk in common with most but not all people are selective and relative about their boundary maintaining mechanism' (1960:25).

3. Freilich has noted this feature as characteristic of Iroquois life today (1958).

# APPENDIX A: CYCLE OF TSAGAN VISITS: CIRCA 1905<sup>1</sup>

Composition of household: 

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TO WHOM</u>	<u>ITEMS BROUGHT</u>	<u>GIFTS RECEIVED</u>
1st	2's older brother	Vodka, meat, butter <u>borts'k</u> , cookies	3: large piece of silk material 1: gold rouble piece, silver money 2: shirt, handkerchief Children: candy, silver money
	2's father's brother		3: dress material 1: gold rouble piece 2: Handkerchief
	2's father's father's brother's son		3: dress material 1: gold rouble piece 2: handkerchief
2nd	1's oldest brother		3: material <sup>2</sup> 1: material Children: silver money
	1's older brother		1: silk material Children: money
2nd week'	1's oldest sister	Vodka, <u>borts'k</u>	2: shirt 1: material Children: money
	1's older sister		2: shirt or handkerchief 1: material
	1's older sister		2: shirt 1: material

## Notes:

1. This information was provided by a daughter of the family who was ten years old at the time of this cycle of visit.
2. Three did not always accompany the family on visits to one's natal relatives.
3. During the remainder of this first week, visits were sometimes made to neighbors. A small bottle of vodka was then taken along as the offering and a handkerchief constituted the gift received.

Other visits were made to more distant relatives, according to the informant, but she could not recall the details beyond the fact that small amounts of vodka were taken as the offering and scarves constituted the gifts. The informant had no recall of the details of visits made to her house.

## APPENDIX B: CYCLE OF TSAGAN VISITS, PRESENT DAY: CASE NUMBERS 1-9




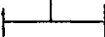

The following cycles of Tsagan visits and the accompanying genealogies and lists of non-traceable kin relations showing the range of relatives available to each household are a sample of those collected by the author during the course of the field investigation.

This material illustrates and supports our analysis of Tsagan Sar. For each household there is a sphere of individuals and households consisting of genealogically traceable relatives and non-traceable relatives which constitutes its body of important social relations. The characteristics of the sphere of relationships of each household in our sample show the variations present. Examination of the cycles of visits and the data on the spheres of relationships demonstrates that, in an effort to preserve the network of ties, substitution on a grand scale has occurred. In the absence of relatives in the traditional positions of 'close relations', movement into these positions of individuals more distantly related has occurred. The various positions within the sphere of relationship characterized by varying degrees of closeness of relationship are now held by people of various kin categories. Our case studies also illustrate the manner in which the factor of degree of closeness of relationship is still the determinative factor with which the dependant factors of amount of vodka brought, presence or absence of the xutsa, value of the gift given and chronological position of the visit are, in general, correlated.

Separate designations have been assigned to each household appearing in the series of cycles. Their reappearance in successive cycles gives us a picture of the interrelatedness of component parts of the Kalmyk social unit. Thus our sample series graphically illustrates a portion of the social network which characterizes this unit.

### Explanation of Abbreviations and Symbols

B	Butter
B1	Blouse
D	Dress
H	Handkerchief
K	Kerchief
M, Mat	Material

plus	<u>Borts'k</u> , cookies, candy, fruit and nuts
Pt	Pint of vodka
1/2 pt	One-half pint of vodka
Qt	Quart of vodka
S	Shirt
Sw	Sweater
X	<u>Xutsa</u>
1, 2 to 2, 1	Individuals 1 and 2 of household making visit perform <u>tsagālxā</u> to individuals 2 and 1 of household being visited
3, 4	Always refer to senior generation, male or female
2	Always refers to junior generation, male
1	Always refers to junior generation, female
/ / /	Gifts received are listed in descending order of generation
	Male
	Female
	Marriage
	Unmarried children
	Household in the United States



## Case Number 1

Cycle of Tesgan Visits: Household E2 (Buzava-Astrakhan; Middle-aged)

VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD						VISITS MADE TO HOUSEHOLD					
DAY	TO WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	TSAGALXA	GIFTS RECEIVED	FREQUENCY	BY WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	TSAGALXA	GIFTS RECEIVED	FREQUENCY	
	Household H	Qt, G, X, plus		5¢/50¢/15¢ from 3 H/ nightgown/ 2.50 from 1							
	Household G	Pt, B, X, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/D/\$6	Every year						
	Household D2Pt, plus		1, 2 to 1	H/\$5-K/\$3	Every year						
	Friend (Astr) 1/2pt, plus		—	H/K	First Time						
	(Hahld R3)										
	Household I2 <sup>2</sup> Pt, B, plus		1, 2 to 3	H/stockings \$3	Every year	Household H Pt, Household D2Pt,			S/B1-\$5/1.50 S/H/50¢		
	Household K2Pt, B,		1, 2 to 3	H/clip/75¢	Every year						
	Household U2 <sup>3</sup> Pt,		—	H/B1/\$-1.50	Every year						
						Friend (Astr) Pt, plus		—	H/B1	Every year	
						(Hahld T3)			(U.S.)		
						Friend (Astr) Pt,		—	H/B1	Every year	
						(Hahld Y3)			(U.S.)		
						Friend (Astr) 1/2pt, plus		—	K	Every year	
						(Hahld H2)			(U.S.)		
						Friend (Astr) 1/2pt,		—	K/\$2	Every year	
						(Hahld S3)			(U.S.)		
						Household I2 Pt, B,			S/B1	Every year	
						Individual A Pt			S	Every year	
						Household W2 1/2pt,			S/B1/\$2	Every year	
									(U.S.)		
						Household U2Pt, B,			S/B1-\$1/B-\$2	Every year	
						Household K2Pt, B,			K/Nightgown	Every year	
									D		
						Friend (Astr) —		—	S/S/50¢	Every year	
									(U.S.)		
						Friend (Astr) 1/2pt, plus		—	H/B1/\$1	First Time	
						(Hahld R3)					

Cycle of Tsagan Visits: Household E2 (continued)  
VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD

DAY	TO WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	TSAGALXA	GIFTS RECEIVED	FREQUENCY	BY WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	TSAGALXA	GIFTS RECEIVED	FREQUENCY
2nd	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	H/M	Every year (U.S.)	Household G	Pt, B, plus	1, 2 to 2, 1	S/Bl-\$2/\$1	Every year
3rd						Individuals	Candy	—	H	Intermittently
						D, E & F			H/Bl/\$5	Every year since became in-laws
						Household O2	Pt, plus		H/Bl	
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	H/K/\$5-50¢	Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	S/K/\$10	Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	S/K/H-75¢	Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—		Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	H/K/\$2	Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	H/K/\$1	Every year (U.S.)					
	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	—	H/Bl/\$1	Every year since became in-laws (U.S.)	Friend (Astr)	1 1/2 pt, plus	4	—	Every year (U.S.)
	Household O2	1 1/2 pt, plus				Household X2	1 1/2 pt	—	S/M	Intermittently
						Household K	Pt, plus	1, 2 to 2, 1	S/Bl-\$1	Every year (U.S.)
						Friend (Astr)	Qt wine, plus	—	S/Bl-\$1	Every year (U.S.)
						(Hahid P)				
10th	Household W2	Pt, plus		H/K		Household N2	Pt,		Scarf/Bl-\$1	
11th						& Individual G			Scarf	
17th	Household D3	Pt, B, plus, meat		S/M	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.					
18th	Individual C	Pt, plus		50¢/\$1	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.					
	Household L	Pt, B,		SM/50¢-H	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.					

Cycle of Tsagan Visits: Household E2 (continued)

DAY	TO WHOM	VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD		FREQUENCY	BY WHOM	VISITS MADE TO HOUSEHOLD		FREQUENCY
		ITEMS	TSAGALXA			ITEMS	TSAGALXA	
		BROUGHT	RECEIVED			BROUGHT	RECEIVED	
		1/2 pt, B,	S/M/H-\$1.50	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Household H13 <sup>4</sup>	Pt, B, plus meat <sup>7</sup>		Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Household I3	1/2 pt,	—	First time				
	Household C3	Pt, B, plus meat	H/Gloves/H 25¢	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Household B3	Pt, b, plus, meat <sup>7</sup>	S/M/\$2	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Household E3	Pt, plus	S/Sw/\$3	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Priests at Don 1/2pt, Society A Temple		S/D/\$1	Ger., Russia, 1st year in U.				
	Household W3	1/2 pt,	H/H/25¢	Every year (U.S.)				
	Household K	Pt,	S/B1/\$1	Every year				
	Household C3	Qt,			Household C3 Qt, plus			S/D/K-\$5 Ger., Russia, 1st time in U.
					Household D3 Pt,			S/D/K-\$5 Ger., Russia, 1st time in U. Every year

NOTES

1. Tsagalxa is performed only to the mother; brother is younger than 1 and so must visit first.
2. Household E2 initiates the visit here though their relative is younger, in order to show respect to the senior man of the household despite the fact that he is only a step relative.
3. The visit to this household is made first because of proximity to Household K2, though both Household E2 and Household U2 recognize that the latter should visit first. Therefore Household E2 does not perform the Tsagalxa here but it is performed when Household U2 reciprocates the visit the next day.

He received

Tsagalxa

from 1, 2

4. Only children were at home when the visit was made, however, the offering was left.

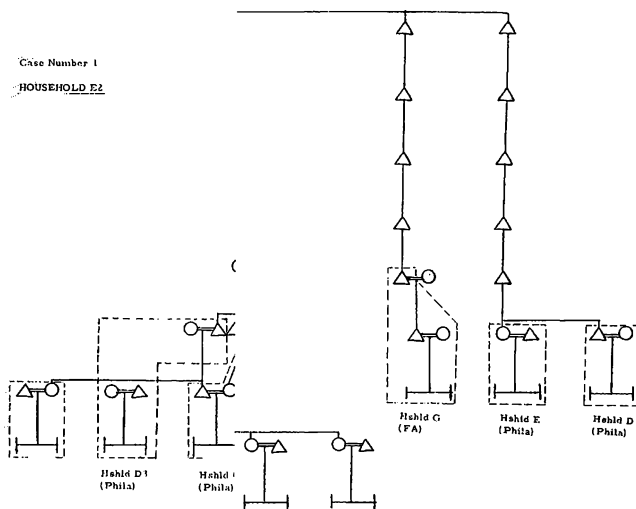
5. This household contains Individual C who is the father-in-law of the man of the house. It is to him that Tsagalxa is performed.

6. This series of visits made in Philadelphia is performed because of availability of author's car. These families were visited because the family was in the United States as they also lived in Philadelphia the first time. The family does not own a car because of the man's inability to obtain a license due to physical disability. Hence difficulties of traveling have not permitted visits to these 'more distant relatives' to be made.

7. Meat was brought as part of the offering because 2 had not visited this household since her father's death.

Case Number 1

HOUSEHOLD E2



**Case Number 2**

**Cycle of Tsagan Visits:** Household M (Buzava: Young)

DATE	TO WHOM	VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD		FREQUENCY	BY WHOM	VISITS MADE TO HOUSEHOLD		FREQUENCY	
		ITEMS BROUGHT	TSAGALXA			GIFTS RECEIVED	TSAGALXA		GIFTS RECEIVED
	Household U Pt, B, Household K3 Pt, B,			\$54/\$45-shoes H/K-\$5/\$2	Every year	Household U Pt, Household V3 Pt,	---	S/Gold earrings S/Bt	Every year
				H/K-.25¢/25¢	Every year	Household L3 Pt, Household N Pt,	---	SK, H/K S/Bt	Every year
				S/Bt		Household B Pt,	---	S/D/S/Gloves Suit	Intermittently
	Household L3 Pt, Household P2 Pt, Household W Pt,		---	H/K/50¢ H/K H/sltp/25¢		Household M3 Pt,	---	S/K	
6th									
7th									
	Household H Pt, Household M3 Pt, Household X2 Pt, Household G Pt,			H/sltp/5¢ H/\$4/\$20 H/K/\$1 S/K/\$1	Every year Intermittently Every year Every year except for feud period		B, plus	H/K Sw SAM/B/Clothing	Every year Every year Every year
	Household P3 meat			S/Shlp/\$2	first time <sup>2</sup>	Household O3Pt, plus		S/Sw	
	Household A2 Pt, B, plus Friend (Hshld Pt, plus Q3)			H/Mat/\$2 H/K/50¢	Every year First time				
	Household X3 Pt, Household B Qt, Household S/Bt			H/S/D 1, 2 to 4, 3, 2, 1					

## NOTES

1. The woman of the visiting household is 2's elder half-sister. She and her husband are visiting first because of convenience since they had to make a trip to Philadelphia. However, the Tsagalxa was not performed until Household M visited their household in New Jersey.

2. This was the first visit to this household though 2 had visited them with her parents before her marriage. Since this was a first visit the amounts brought as part of the offering were larger than would normally be the case.

3. Since 2's brother has married an American, the visit is made but there is no performance of the Tsagalxa.

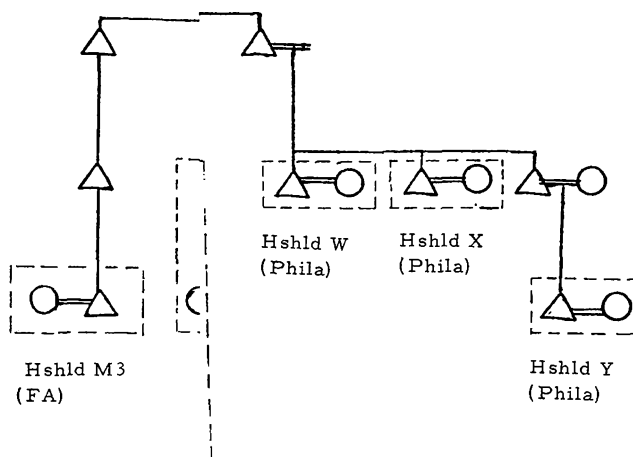
Visits were exchanged with Households X and Y in previous years on an intermittent basis but not during this year because of lack of time.

1 is next-door neighbor  
 name as 1's father but  
 tegory of xudnr to 1's

ceable zē of 2  
 ec'd, was married to

was ax'lāchě at 1 and

er and woman is naxtsa to 2

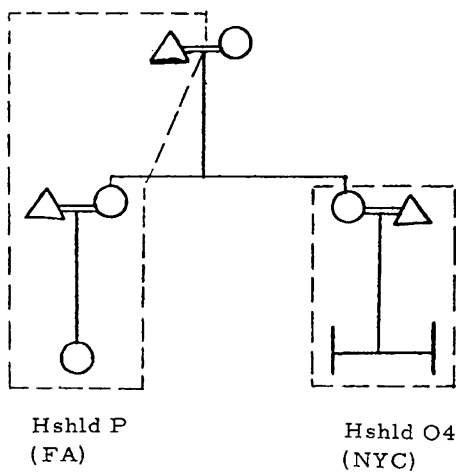


wick)





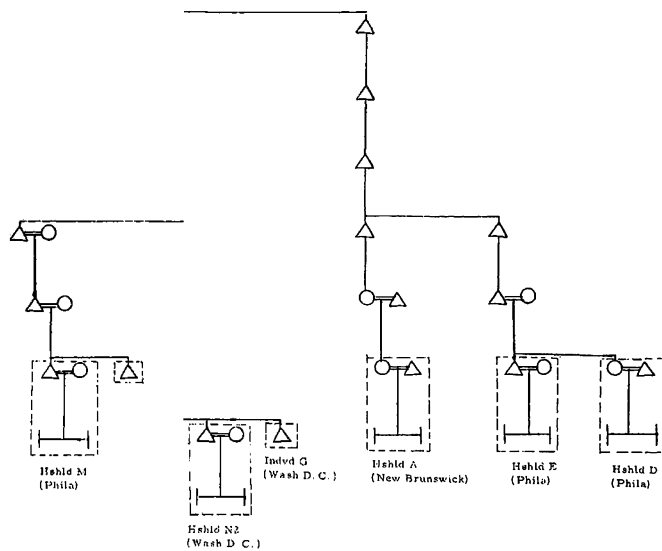
Case Number 3

Non-traceable kin relationsHousehold PHshld K (FA) Man is zē to 1

Case Number 4  
Cycle of Tsagan Visitor: Household G (Buzava: Senior-middle aged)

DAY	TO WHOM	VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD			FREQUENCY	VISITS MADE TO HOUSEHOLD			FREQUENCY
		ITEMS	TSAGALXA	GIFTS		ITEMS	TSAGALXA	GIFTS	
		BROUGHT		RECEIVED		BROUGHT		RECEIVED	
1st									
	Household K	Qt, S, B, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/S/ suit-\$10 clothing-75¢	Every year	Household E2 Pt, X, B, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/D/\$6	Every year
	Household I2	Pt, S, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/S/BI/10¢	Every year	Household D2 Pt, plus	1 to 3, 2, 1	S/clothing-\$2	Every year
	Household J2	Pt	2 to 2	H/K/\$1	Intermittent				
	Friend	Pt, plus	—	H/K/\$1	Intermittent				
	(Hshld W3)								
	Household H	Pt, X, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/S/BI/\$1	Every year				
2nd									
	Household J4	Pt, B, plus	—	S/D/\$4	Intermittent	Household I2	Pt, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/D-\$1/\$2
	Friend	Pt, plus	2, to 2, 1	S/K/\$4	Intermittent	Household H	Pt, X, B, plus	3, 2, 1 to 3	S/D/M/\$4
	(Hshld F2)					Household W2 Pt, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/BI/BI-\$2	Every year
	Household E2	Pt, plus	1, 2 to 2, 1	S/BI/H-\$1	Every year	Individual A	Pt, plus	1 to 3, 2, 1	S
	Household X2	Pt, plus	—	S/S/K/\$4	Every year	Household A	Pt, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/D/Sw-\$4
3rd						Household K	Pt, X, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/D/Sw-\$4
4th						Household X2	Pt, X, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/BI/M/\$6
11th						Friend	Pt, B, plus	1 to 3, 2, 1	S/BI/H
						(Hshld F2)			Intermittent
						Household O2	Pt, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/D/\$2
						Household B	Pt, B, plus	1, 2 to 3, 2, 1	S/D
								3, 4 to 3	S/M
						Household A	Pt, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/BI
						Household E	Pt, X, B, plus	1, 2 to 3	S/D/\$2.50





**Case Number 5**

**Cycle of Teagan Vielte: Household Z (Buzava: Senior-middle aged)**

DAY	VISITS MADE BY HOUSEHOLD			FREQUENCY	VISITS MADE TO HOUSEHOLD		
	TO WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	T\$AGALXA		BY WHOM	ITEMS BROUGHT	T\$AGALXA
	Household A2 <sup>1</sup>	Qt. X, Qt. X.	Every year	H/25¢/\$1.50 H/\$1	Household A2 Pt. plus Household R2 Pt. plus Pt. plus Household A4 Pt. plus Household T Pt. plus	— 1,2 to 4,3,2,1 — — —	S/M/\$1.50 S-\$/B1-\$/1 H/Sw/\$1 H/K/\$1
	Household T <sup>3</sup> Household B4 Pt. plus <sup>4</sup>		Every year	H/stockings/ \$1			
	Household C4 Pt.		Every year	H/K/\$1			
	Household C2 Qt.		Every year	S/10 rouble gold piece \$2			
	Individual C <sup>5</sup> Household B2 Pt. Friend (Hahid D4) Household B3 Pt.		Every year	H/H/H S/Handbag/25¢ Scarf/Umbrella First time 50¢ S/B1/\$1.20	Household B2 Pt. plus	S/B1/\$1.50	
			Every year	H/K/50¢ S/Perfume 75¢ K/50¢	Household O <sup>6</sup> Pt. plus Household X <sup>6</sup> 1/2 pt. plus Friend (Hahid D4)	2 to 4, 3 1,2 to 4, 3 —	H/K H/K S/B1
			Intermittent		Individual A1 Plus	—	Intermittent

## NOTES

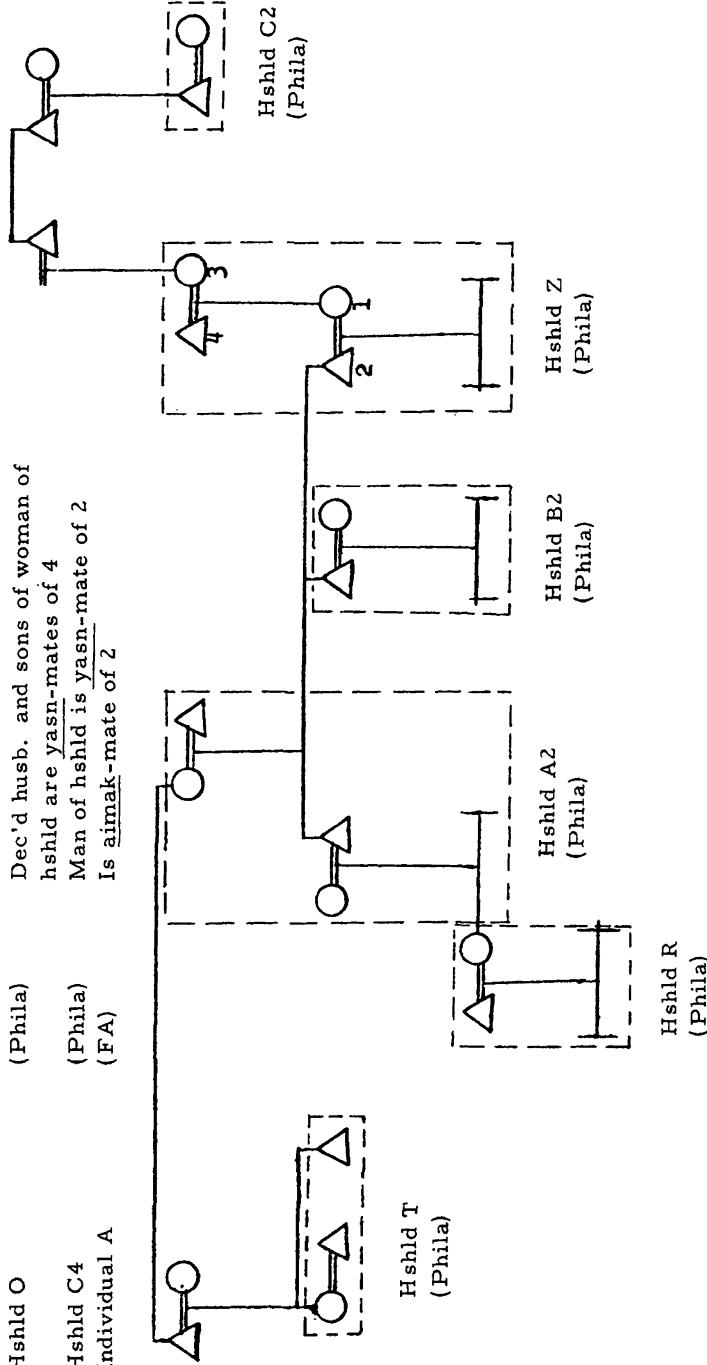
1. Separate offerings were brought to father and brother though they formed a single household.
2. Two offerings were brought to the household because in addition to the traceable relationship, man is yasn mate to four.
3. Couple was not home and offering was left with the brother.
4. The head of household was recently widowed so the visit was made earlier in the cycle than usual. The family was usually visited on the third day.
5. This individual is the priest at the temple attended by the family.
6. This visit was made while 1 and 2 were away from the house.
7. This visit was made by 1 and the children while 2 was at work.

# Non-traceable kin relations

Case Number 5

Hshlds A4, X, C3 Hshld B4	(all Phila) (Phila)	Man of hshld is yasn-mate of 4 Dec'd husb. of female head of hshld was yasn-mate of 2
Hshld B3	(Phila)	Senior woman of hshld is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 4
Hshld O	(Phila)	Dec'd husb. and sons of woman of hshld are yasn-mates of 4
Hshld C4 Individual A	(Phila) (FA)	Man of hshld is yasn-mate of 2 Is <u>aimak-mate</u> of 2

## Household Z



APPENDIX C: ACCOUNT OF A SHAMANISTIC CEREMONY  
AS RECORDED BY PALLAS (1776 II:341-345)

Pallas records the following details of a shamanistic ceremony which he witnessed among the Dörbet. The shaman or Udugun was an unmarried girl. The occasion was the illness of a woman, and the ceremony was performed in her tent in the evening on a day deemed lucky. (Shamans always performed at night.) Those days associated with the mouse were considered most propitious for such ceremonies.

The sheep, constituting the offering, was slaughtered by the shaman's assistant inside the tent of the sponsor of the ceremony. Then the breastbone was loosened from the hide; the fat and blood collected, and the jawbone, tongue, throat, windpipe, lung, heart and liver severed from the body and all were washed and placed in a kettle. The body of the sheep was cut into halves; the meat was cut from the bones and also placed in the kettle. Only the right shoulder portion was left raw. The breast bone was wrapped in strips of hide with the point of the triangle exposed and placed on the top of the kettle. Then the shoulder bone (schagai [sic]) was tied to a piece of red silk cloth and tied over the cross of the smoke hole. Opposite the door, the shaman arranged a picture of šagdžamuni on a small chest, prepared a dough lamp and placed it before the picture. The kettle was removed from the fire and the cooked meat placed in a large tray held by two men, first before the door, then over the fire and finally before the householder and the shaman who were seated together.

The best meat — the ears, and the half sole together with a piece of skin and all the giblets were stuffed into a sack, by the shaman with the heart uppermost. Fat from the offering was hung over the three-footed hearth. The male head of the household distributed ārki to those assembled while the cooked meat was separated into three portions. The bad meat — the brain — was disposed of, the best meat was displayed and then eaten by the male head of the household and the noble members of the audience; and the remaining ordinary meat was consumed by the rest of the audience. Two relatives of the household were allowed to keep bones with meat.

After the meat was consumed, the preparations for the usual fire offering were made. A pyre of wood was made and three round fat lamps were arranged in a triangle around it. A length of cord made from sheep's wool was wrapped around the breast bone, and



with the remaining fat from the kidney, the skull and jawbone, the joints of leg bone still attached, it was covered by the rib section and pieces of fat. The ill woman poured ärki onto the fire as an offering, followed by milk, sugar, raisins, large pieces of dripping butter and fat. Over all this, she put a branch of Sewendenbaum [sic] (Arza) and pieces of wood. The shaman then stood up and gave the man of the household a basin with meat and meat brew to hold in his right hand and the raw shoulder blade of the offering animal still wrapped in string to hold in his left hand. She took then the sack with meat and thread on each of the three lamps and flourished the bag over the fire as though she were making manifest the astral spirit which she called hither with the word churu [sic] čurri frequently repeated. Then the shaman moved to a position before the man of the household and laughingly held up to his mouth the heart which she had removed from the bag. He then bit off the tip of the heart, after which his wife and son did likewise.

Then the shaman laid aside the sack; the man of the household laid aside the raw shoulder blade and the woman of the household took the caul from the offering and placed it with a copper coin on the fire. The shaman took a bell in her left hand and a lash in her right hand and began to reel to and fro, shrieking invocations and making movements with her body, arms and head. Her cap fell off and was picked up by her helper who held it under his arm while he held a smoking branch of Sewendenbaum [sic] in his other hand.

After a half hour, the shaman had worked herself into a sweat and felt sufficiently inspired to prophesy — using the voice of her helper as a medium. At first, she concerned herself with the future of the man of the household and then with those of others assembled. Finally, after an hour, she laid aside her whip, and using two bells, she seemed to see two new spirits, Dai Chaltun [sic] (mermaid) and Okin tengery [sic] (Okn Tengr) (Heaven Maiden). The performance ended and the remaining meat in the sack was eaten and those assembled withdrew. The bones of the offering remained in the fireplace until entirely consumed. The raw shoulder blade was consumed on the third day. The copper money which had been placed in the fire was removed on the following day by the woman of the household and kept as a holy object. The shoulder blade was kept for purposes of prophecy, the future to be proclaimed according to the cracks resulting from burning.

APPENDIX D: ACCOUNT OF RITES ASSOCIATED WITH  
MARRIAGE AS RECORDED BY NEBOL'SIN (1852:61-83)

Nebol'sin's account begins with a description of a young man's parents' inquiries for a suitable bride for their son. They inquired in the surrounding areas of their ulus but not in their own xoton, for 'from one's own xoton, due to the close relationship between all the members, brides are not taken' (Nebol'sin 1852:61).

When a particular girl seemed well-suited, the boy's father traveled to the girl's area and made inquiries about her physical appearance, character, and about her family's economic situation. Using a pretext, the father appeared at her xoton and was invited in, as hospitality was never denied to a stranger. After spending a day there, he returned home with the information acquired. His wife also visited the bride's xoton on some pretext and was extended the usual hospitality. When she returned home, they discussed the relative merits of the girl and her family and made their decision. They informed their son 'that it is time for him to become their support and take a wife'.

Then the son, on a pretext, briefly visited the xoton of the girl. Upon his return, he announced his decision. If he did not favor the match, he so informed his parents, but if he did, he merely said, 'For me a father's and mother's will is law and I dare not disobey'. It was not respectable to say, 'I am ready to be married' (Nebol'sin 1852:62, 62).

After some time, the boy's father together with two or three married male relatives rode to the bride's xoton. They took along three, four or even six skins of ärki. They entered the tent of the bride's parents and without a word, drank a toast to her father and mother which indicated the purpose of their visit. The hosts slaughtered a ram and seated their guests in the places of honor in the tent. They conversed all night about incidents and events on the steppe while continuing to drink and eat. The next morning, the guests left. Several weeks later, the visit was repeated with the same procedure. But in the morning, the boy's father took an opportunity to be alone with the parents of the bride. He tells them 'you have a bride, I have a worthy son; I would like to enter into kinship with you.' If the father of the bride had made other plans for her, he informed the boy's father in the most delicately chosen phrases such as, 'I will think about it', which simply interpreted meant a definite no (Nebol'sin 1852:64). If the girl's father made no reply, this signified tentative acceptance.

After a period of time, the groom's father made a third visit to the bride's parents. These three visits were collectively known as uulen-dousho. In addition to close relatives, a few more young married people went along. They carried ten wine skins and a slaughtered ram. The boy's father took along a board of tea and a paper bundle in his shirt containing a piece of raw hide belting and a bit of dry fish glue. 'The caravan rides off joyfully to the bride as they have drunk considerably at home for the road' (Nebol'sin 1852:64). At the end of the journey, the groom's father carried the wine into the bride's tent and drank a toast to all present. Then the ram was dragged in and the boy's father's friends skinned it and threw the pieces into a kettle to cook. The boy's father placed the bundle with the tea, glue and belting into the hands of the bride's father. The glue and belting signified the betrothal and the acceptance of them 'signified the final unbreakable agreement to marry' (Nebol'sin 1852:65). The next day, when the guests were about to leave for home, the girl's father, in the presence of his daughter and the groups declared to the groom's father that he was happy and ready to enter into kinship with him (Nebol'sin 1852:65).

Nebol'sin notes that princes do not observe all these preliminaries but carried on this matchmaking through correspondence.

After the betrothal was formally announced, the groom's father invited all the members of his xoton and his close friends to a feast. Much food and drink were prepared and the celebration was spirited. The groom's father then began to purchase items necessary for the wedding including Russian vodka, rings, earrings, silk handkerchiefs, cakes, Persian dried fruits and various kinds of sweets. Somewhat later he again entertained his xoton neighbors with feasting and drinking. During all this time, the son was out on the steppe with the herds. Finally, returning to camp, his parents formally informed him that his wedding was soon to be performed.

The groom and his young male friends then took several skins of ärki, some rams and Russian vodka and set out for the bride's xoton. The groom carried some gifts for his bride with him. On their arrival, the bride's father notified his neighbors and all came to the bride's xoton. The men entered the tent of the bride's parents. Another tent was set up for the ladies including the bride, her mother and other female relatives and friends. This tent was referred to as kuukut beredn ner 'the gathering of girls and young wives.' Soon the bride's mother entered the first tent and called the groom and the other young men to join the girls. The older married women then joined their husbands in the parents' tent. At

the beginning of the festivities, the groom delivered his gifts to the bride. During the dancing, the bride delivered her gifts to the groom. The singing and dancing continued until dawn when the groom and his friends departed. The rest of the guests continued their celebration 'until they could no longer keep themselves firm in their saddles' (Nebol'sin 1852:69). These first rites of matchmaking and betrothal were called šagata (Nebol'sin 1852:69).

The groom's parents then consulted with the priests as to a propitious day for the announcement to the bride's parents of the wedding day. On that day, the groom's family and closest relatives depart for the bride's camp bringing various gifts such as ārki, vodka, various types of sweets and several slaughtered cattle. There the bride's family had been cooking and preparing for the festivities. Eating and drinking began as soon as the groom and his family arrived. The next morning, the groom's parents declared to the bride's parents that they desired to have the wedding ritual performed and 'indirectly the former tried to find out the amount which they were expected to contribute and particularly what type of gifts they were expected to bring for the important people such as the nobles, the zaisang, the more honored friends and closest relatives of the bride (Nebol'sin 1852:71). The bride's father might suggest a ram for one, a horse for another. When the list was totalled, the groom's father might object that the figure was too high, and the bargaining began. This bargaining was referred to as unulga and yumsulgae (Nebol'sin 1852:71). The groom's family also provided the material for the bride's dress, the material for bedcurtains, carpets for the tent, horsehides and little rugs for the head of the bed as well as other sundries for the new household. These items were brought to the bride by the groom's mother. The latter then announced to the bride that the groom's tent was ready to receive the couple. The bride's family provided all the items for the bed, the cooking utensils and the bride's clothing.

The groom's father then invited the priest-astrologer to visit his xoton. During this visit, the priest set up the household shrine or burxan and blessed the new tent. At this time he selected the most appropriate date for the wedding.

Before the selected date, the family of the groom, the groom himself, close relatives, invited guests and friends as well as the priest journeyed to the bride's xoton. They took along three camels to carry the tent and furnishings to be used by the newlyweds. Other camels and pack animals were loaded with provisions to be served to the guests — including slaughtered cattle, cooked meats,

Russian wine, skins of ärki and barrels of chikir (a Caucasian home-brewed wine) (Nebol'sin 1852:72) On their arrival, the tent was set up near the bride's parents tent, and in between the two tents were placed all the provisions and the gifts. The groom's party lined up behind these items — elders, women and young men separately. The priest who came with the group sat in the tent. Older people from the groom's side were invited into the tent where festivities began. The young men moved to other tents where dancing and feasting took place.

The next morning, the female relatives of the bride set up the household equipment in the couple's tent. The male elders of the groom called on the priest to chose the time for performing the ceremony and then informed the bride's elders.

The ceremony which parallels that described by Pallas was performed at the entrance to the couple's tent. The rug was spread and a shirduk, a white strip of clean quilted felt, was placed on top. Behind the shirduk, was a table holding the burxan or household shrine. In front of the burxan on a plate was placed the choice tid-bits of meat and the šaga tsmigen or ram's scapula. At the same time in the bride's parents' tent, the bride is stripped of her maidenly attire by her mother, aunts and the young married women and puts on womanly attire. This is a variation from the procedure described by Pallas and other early writers who observed that the bride changed into the dress of a woman after the religious rite. However, Nebol'sin observes that the replaiting of her hair did not take place until later. The bride then said her farewells, praying before the burxan and kissing her parents and brothers and sisters. Her mother and the groom's mother then led her into the couple's tent and she was seated. The groom was summoned and was also seated in the tent. The fathers of both entered and ordered the couple to stand. At this point, the sister or the closest female relative of the groom handed him a clean white handkerchief which he placed over the bride's face 'in order to hide her embarrassment' and lead her out of the tent to the shirduk. The bride's family stood to the left and that of the groom to the right. Around them stood the guests. All removed their hats and the ceremony commenced.

The prayers and the ceremony with the sheep's scapula were then performed. The priest took the image of the burxan from the table and touched the groom's head and then the bride's. This completed the wedding ritual. The burxan and the table were then taken into the couple's tent by the priest. He returned to lead the couple, who were still holding the sheep's scapula, into the tent. At the entrance to the tent, he took the scapula from them and

placed it on the burxan table and ordered the couple to genuflect three times before it.

After praying, all entered the tent. The couple were seated, the groom at the head and the bride at the foot of the bed. The honored guests were seated to the right of the head of the bed, the priest beneath the burxan and the women to the right and the men to the left of the entrance. After all were seated, the priest stripped the meat from the sheep's scapula and gave bits of it to the groom, to the bride and to their parents. The groom ate the meat and then presented a gift of money to the priest who congratulated and blessed the couple and then left. The shirduk was placed on the top of the bed and the sheep's scapula into a chest. The feast then began. Some of each item and some wine skins were sent to the prince or noyon. They were brought to him by the groom in person if his tent was nearby. After supper the guests moved to other tents and the feasting continued. The husband then left the tent for a moment and the bride's hair was replaited by her husband's young female relatives. The couple were then left alone, their tent being fastened from the outside. The bride's parents 'informed of this, performed the sacrifice to fire, the galteskho (Gal Tjalg'n). The next morning, after having slept on the shirduk, the couple placed it in their chest with the sheep's scapula for permanent safe-keeping.

The new husband tended the herds during the day while the young wife remained at home. In the evening, the husband joined his friends in feasting. This continued each day for three days following the wedding. During this time, the wife was not seen by anyone but her husband and their parents. The curtains around the marriage bed were not drawn aside during this time. On the fourth day, the guests came to the tent and the husband's parents removed the bed curtains, leaving only one curtain which was decorated. They then present the new husband and wife to the guests. There was drinking and revelry after which the husband's group prepared to depart for their own xoton. The husband's parents removed the bedcurtains. If the father was not present, his place was taken by another married man who was thereafter regarded as a close relative of the family. The bride packed their possessions which together with the tent was loaded onto camels. The articles comprising the dowry were also loaded onto animals at this time.

The bride mounted a horse, following her husband and surrounded by her own relatives and followed by the horses, sheep and cattle which her parents had given to them. All ride off to her husband's xoton, where further ceremony awaited her.

Riders galloped ahead to inform the xoton so that the husband's parents' tent could be put into order. Upon arrival, a clean shirduk was placed 150 feet in front of the parents' tent. The newlyweds sat on the shirduk while their tent was set up to the right of the husband's parents' tent. The husband's father then entered his tent and the ritual of etsege-eken-gertu-bire-murguku or greetings for father's and mother's house from the daughter-in-law began. The husband's mother took the bride by the hand and led her to the father. The young husband followed. The bride genuflected three times at the threshold of the tent, after which the kinsmen entered the tent in the usual order — first mother, then son, then bride and then the rest of the guests. All seated themselves in correct order and the sacrifice to fire — the galteakho (Gal Tjalg'n) was performed while a ram was cooked in the kettle. After the meal, the guests left and the bride assisted her husband's father and mother to bed and then returned to her own tent.

Nebol'sin notes that all of these rituals took place among the pure steppe Kalmyks (1852:80). However, he notes that princes at times introduced changes, supplements and superfluous embellishments.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aberle, David F.  
1953      The Kinship System of the Kalmuk Mongols.  
University of New Mexico Publications in  
Anthropology No. 8. Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Adelman, Fred  
1954      The Kalmyks of the Lower Volga Region and  
their Kinship Structures. Unpublished Masters  
Essay. University of Pennsylvania.
- 1960      Kalmyk Cultural Renewal. PhD dissertation.  
Ann Arbor, University Microfilms.
- Bacon, Elizabeth  
1958      Obok: a Study of Social Structure in Eurasia.  
Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology 25,  
New York.
- Baddeley, John F.  
1919      Russia, Mongolia, China. London, Macmillian  
and Co., Ltd.
- Barnes, J. A.  
1954      Class and Committee in a Norwegian Island  
Parish. Human Relations 7: (1:) 39-58.
- Bentokovski, V. I.  
1868      Zhilishcha i pishcha Kalmykov Bol'shederbetskago  
Ulusa. Sbornik statisticheskikh svedenii o  
Stavropol'skoi Gubernii. V. I: 82-104.
- Bergmann, Benjamin  
1804-05      Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmüken in  
den Jahren 1802 und 1803. Riga.
- 1825      Voyage de Benjamin Bergman. Chez les Kalmuks.  
Tr. d' allemand par M. Moris. Châtillon-sur-  
Seine, C. Cornillac.



- Biüler', Baron O.  
1846 Kochuiushchie i osedlo-zhivushchie v Astrak-hanskoi Gubernii Inorodtsii. Kalmyki: ikh stepnoi byt i pravo, upravlenie i sudoproizvodstvo. Otechestvennye Zapiski 47: (2:) 10-28, 59-125; 48: (2:) 57-94; 49: (2:) 1-44.
- Bobrovnikov, A.  
1849 Grammatika Mongol'sko-Kalmyckago yazyka. Kazan.
- Boianus, C. K.  
1932 Russko-angliiskii slovar'. Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe slovarno-entsiklopedicheskoe izdvo.
- Borisov, T.  
1926 Kalmykii: istoriko-politicheskii i sozhal'no-ekonomicheskii ocherk. Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Boorie, W. D.  
1959 The Cultural Integration of Immigrants. UNESCO.
- Breton, Raymond  
1964 Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants. American Journal of Sociology 70: 193-205.
- Breton, Raymond and Maurice Pinard  
1960 Group Formation Among Immigrants: Criteria and Processes. Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 26: 465-477.
- Bretschneider, E.  
1910 Medieval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources. London, K. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd.
- Bronevski, Vladimir  
1834 Istoriia donskago voiska, opisanie donskoi zemli i kavkazski mineral'nykh vod. Pts. II and III. St. Petersburg Committee of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1954 Notes and Queries on Anthropology. 6th ed. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Crumrine, N. Ross  
1964 The House Cross of the Mayo Indians of Sonora, Mexico. Anthropological Papers No. 8. University of Arizona.

- D'Arbois de Jubainville, H.  
1905        *La Famille Celtique: Étude de droit comparé*  
              Paris, Librairie Emile Bouillon.
- De Quincey, Thomas  
1862        *Revolt of the Tartars; or Flight of the Kalmuck*  
              *Khan and His People From the Russian Territories*  
              *to the Frontiers of China.* Edinburgh, Adam  
              and Charles Black.
- Desai, Rashmi  
1963        *Indian Immigrants in Britain.* London, Oxford  
              University Press.
- Dubrov, Ia. P.  
1898        *Byt Kalmykov Stavropol'skoi Gubernii.* Kazan.
- Eaton, J. W.  
1952        *Controlled Acculturation: A Survival Technique of*  
              *Hutterites.* *American Sociological Review* 17:331-340.
- Efremoff, A. E.  
              As quoted by Wischnewski, B. N. 1928 *Zeitschrift*  
              *für Konstitutionslehre.* 13:272.
- Eisenstadt, S. N.  
1951 a       *Research on the Cultural and Social Adaptation of*  
              *Immigrants.* *International Social Science Bulletin*  
              III: 258-262.
- 1951 b       *Absorption of Immigrants.* Jerusalem, Hebrew  
              University.
- Farforovski, C.  
1909        *Polukochevye narody severnago Kavkaza: Kalmyki*  
              *Stavropol'skoi Gubernii.* *Sbornik materialov*  
              *dliia opisaniia mestnostei i plemen Kavkaza*  
              Vol. 40. Section I:71-112. Tiflis.
- 1910        *Narodnoe obrazovanie sredi Kalmykov Bol'shogo*  
              *Derbeta v sviazi s ix bytom i istoriei.* *Zhurnal*  
              *Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniia.*
- Firth, Raymond  
1951        *Elements of Social Organization.* London, Watts  
              and Co.
- Francis, E. K.  
1947        *The Nature of the Ethnic Group.* *American Journal*  
              *of Sociology* 52:393-400.

- Francis, E. K.  
1948      The Russian Mennonites From Religious to Ethnic Group. *American Journal of Sociology* 54:101-107.
- Freilich, M.  
1958      Cultural Persistence among Modern Iroquois  
*Anthropos* 53:473-483.
- Georgi, J. G.  
1776-80    Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reiches, 4 parts. St. Petersburg.
- Gluckman, Max  
1959      The Origins of Social Organization. In *Readings in Anthropology*, Morton H. Fried, ed. Vol. II: 246-258. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell.
- Golushko, A. Y.; S. E. Kashkarov, B. T. Filipov and I. J. Shalitev  
1933      Staatliches Medizinisches Institut. Astrakhan. Wissenschaftliche Werke I No. 3.
- Goodenough, Ward  
1955      A Problem in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization. *American Anthropologist* 57:71-83.
- 1962      Kindred and Hamlet in Laklai, New Britain, *Ethnology* 1:5-12.
- Hohenthal W. D. and T. McCorkle  
1955      The Problem of Aboriginal Persistence. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 11:288-300.
- Horobin, G. W.  
1957      Adjustment and Assimilation: the D. P. *Sociological Review N. S.* 5: (2:) 239-254.
- Howard, J. H.  
1961      Cultural Persistence and Cultural Change as reflected in Oklahoma-Seneca-Cayuga Ceremonialism. *Plains Anthropologist* 6: (11) 21-36.
- Howorth, Henry  
1876-80    History of the Mongols. London, Longmans, Green. 4 vol.
- Ivanovskii, A. A.  
1893      Antropologicheskii ocherk Torgoutov Tarbagataiskoi Oblasti, Kitaiskoi Imperii, Mongoly-Torgouty. *Izvestiia Imperatorskago Obshchestva Liubitelei Estestvoznaniia, Antropologii i Etnografii Tom LXXI. Trudy. Antropologii Otdel Tom. XVII. Moskve.*

- Kalmyki**  
1880      Kalmyki: Ustroistvo Byta i Zaniatiia Priroda i Liudi. Noiabr 1880:1-28.
- Klass, Morton**  
1961      East Indians in Trinidad. New York, Columbia University Press.
- Korolev,**  
1903      Astrakhanskii Kalmyki. Russkii Antropologicheskii Zhurnal No. 1:23-47. Moskva.
- Kostenkov, Kapiton I.**  
1869      Statisticheskii svedeniia o Kalmykakh kochuiushchikh v Astrakhanskoi Gubernii. Trudy Astrakhanskago Gubernskago Statisticheskago Komiteta V. I: 1-57.
- 1870      Istoricheskii i Statisticheskii Svedeniia o Kalmykakh Kochuiushchikh v Astrakhanskoi Gubernii. St. Petersburg, V. Nusval'ta.
- Kotwicz, W.**  
1905      Kalmytskii Zagadki i Poslovitsy. St. Petersburg.
- 1916      Deklinacja we Wspolczesnym jezyku Kalmuckim. Rocznik Orientalistyczny 2:225-238.
- 1949      Contributions à l'histoire de l'Asie Centrale. Rocznik Orientalistyczny 15:159-195.
- Krader, Lawrence**  
1954      Kinship Systems of the Altaic Speaking Peoples. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Cambridge, Harvard University.
- 1963      Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Pastoral Nomads. Indiana University Publications: Uralic and Altaic Series Volume 20.
- Krasnov, Nikolai I.**  
1863      Zemlia Voiska Donskago. Materialy dlia Geografii i Statistiki Rossi. Vol. 7. St. Petersburg, Departamenta General' nago Shtaba.
- Kroeber, A. L. and Talcott Parsons**  
1958      The Concepts of Culture and of Social System. American Sociological Review 23:582-83.
- Krueger, John**  
1964      Burial Customs of the Mongols. Mongolia Society Newsletter Vol. III, No. 1:2-5.

- Krukovskaia, S. K.  
1904 Po rodnoi zemle: Astrakhanskii Krai. St. Petersburg.
- Kushner, G. and M. Gibson, J. Gulick, J. Honigmann and R. Nonas  
1962 What Accounts for Sociocultural Change? A Propositional Inventory. Institute for Research in Social Science. University of North Carolina. Chapel Hill.
- L. N.  
1890 Byt Donskikh Kalmykov. Ekonomicheskii Zhurnal No. 6-7:57-68.
- Leontovich, F. I.  
1879 K Istorii Prava Russkikh Inorodtsev: Drevnii mongolo-kalmytskii ili oiratskii ustav vzyskanii (Tsaaddzhin-Bichik). Zapiski Imperatorskago Novorossiiskago Universiteta T. 28: (3:) 1-282.  
1880 K istorii prava Russkikh Inorodtsev: Kalmytskoe pravo. Zapiski Imperatorskago Novorossiiskago Universiteta T. 29:1-440.
- Lepekhin, Ivan  
1774 Tagebuch der Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reiches in den Jahren 1768 und 1769. Altenburg.
- Libby, Dorothy  
1960 Three Hundred Years of Chukchi Ethnic Identity. In Man and Culture, A. F. C. Wallace, ed. 298-304. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Loewenthal, Rudolph  
1952 The Fate of the Kalmuks and of the Kalmuk ASSR. External Research Papers No. 101. Washington, Department of State.
- Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennykh Imushchestv  
1868 Kalmytskaia Step' Astrakhanskoi Gubernii. Kumo-Manychskaiia Ekspeditsiia. St. Petersburg.
- Menges, Karl  
1955 Altajische Lehnwörter im Slavischen. Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie 23:327-334.
- Miller, Robert I.  
1959 Monasteries and Culture Change in Inner Mongolia. Asiatische Forschungen 2. Wiesbaden.

- Mow, Joseph  
n. d. Kalmyk Resettlement in the United States. New York, Church World Service, Inc.
- Mol'kov, A. B.  
1928 Kalmyki: issledovanie sanitarnogo sostoiâniâ i zapasa zhiznennykh sil. Gosudarstvennyi Institut Sotsial'noi Gigieny. Moskva.
- N. K.  
1893 Osvobozhdenie Kalmykov ot obiazatel'nykh otnoshenii K svoim rodovym Vladeteliâm. Pravoslavnyi Vlagovestnik No. 7 K. I:31-38.
- N. O. V.  
1862 Kalmyki. Stavropol'skaia Guberniia. Vedomosti No. 21, 22.
- Nebol'sin, Pavel I.  
1853 Ocherki byta Kalmykov Khoshoutovskago Ulusa. St. Petersburg, Karla Kraiia.
- Nefed'ev, N.  
1834 Podrobnyiâ svedeniâ o Volzhskikh Kalmykakh. St. Petersburg, Karla Kraiia.
- Oblastnoi Pravlenie Voiska Donskago  
1891 Statisticheskoe opisanie zemli Donskikh Kazakov sostavlennoe v 1822-32.
- Oulanoff, B.  
1959 Tsagan. Novoe Russkoe Slovo. February 6, 1959.
- Pallas, Peter Simon  
1771 Reise durch Verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reiches. 6 vol.  
1776 Samlungen Historischer Nachrichten uber die Mongolischen Volkerschaften. St. Petersburg, Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Pal'mov, N. N.  
1926-32 Etiudy po istorii privolzhskikh Kalmykov XVII i XVIII Veka. Chast' I V. Astrakhan, Kalmytskago Oblastnogo Ispolnitel'nogo Komiteta.
- Patterson, Sheila  
1963 Dark Strangers: A Sociological Study of the Absorption of A Recent West Indian Migrant Group in Brixton, South London. London, Tavistock Publications.

- Pisemskii, A.  
1860      Kalmyki. Biblioteka dlia Chteniia 158:  
(January:) 1-34.
- Pollitzer, William S.  
1962      Blood Types and Anthropometry of the Kalmucks.  
American Journal of Physical Anthropology N. S.  
20:11-15.
- Popov, A.  
1839      Kratkiia zamechaniia o privolzhskikh Kalmykakh.  
Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniia  
Chast' XXII: 17-46.
- 1847      Grammatika Kalmytskago iazyka. Kazan.
- Poppe, Nicholas  
1955      Stand der Kalmukenforschungen. Wiener  
Zeitschrift fur die Kunde des Morgenlandes  
52: 346-379.
- Powell, T. G. E.  
1958      The Celts. New York, Frederick A. Praeger.
- Pozdneev, A.  
1888      Kalmytskii skazki. Zapiski Vostochnago  
Otdeleniia Imperatorskago Russkago Arkheolo-  
gicheskago Obshchestva T. 3: 303-364.
- 1911      Kalmytsko-Russkii Slovar' v posobie k izucheniiu  
Russkago iazyka v Kalmytskikh Nachal'nykh  
Shkolakh. St. Petersburg.
- Price, C. A.  
1959      Immigration and Group Settlement. In The  
Cultural Integration of Immigrants, W. D. Boorie,  
ed. p. 267-288. UNESCO.
- Ramstedt, G. J.  
1909-19      Kalmückische Sprachproben I Theil. Kalmückische  
Märchen 1-2. Mémoires de la Société Finno-  
Ougriene XXVII. Helsingfors.
- 1935      Kalmückisches Wörterbuch. Lexica Societatis  
Fenno-Ugricae III. Helsinki.
- Riasanovsky, Valentin A.  
1929      Customary Law of the Mongol Tribes. Harbin,  
'Artistic Printing House'.
- 1937      Fundamental Principles of Mongol Law. Tientsin.

- River, Walter L.  
1939           The Torguts. New York Frederic A. Stokes Company.
- Smirnov, P.  
1885           O Kalmykakh. Astrakhanskaia Eparkhiia. Vedomosti No. 5, 6, 10.  
  
1857           Kratkii Russko-Kalmytskii Slovar. Kazan.
- Smith, M. G.  
1956           On Segmentary Lineages. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 86: (2:) 39-78.
- Shabad, Theodore  
1951           Geography of the USSR. New York.
- Snesarev, Nikolai  
1881           Donskaia Eparkhiia i Desiatiletanii Upravlenie Ey Arkhiepiskopa Platona, T. 12: (9:) 1-64. Odessa.
- Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Acculturation,  
1953  
1954           Acculturation: An Exploratory Formulation. American Anthropologist 56:973-1002.
- Spasskii, N.  
1894           Obrazovanie Kalmykov Astrakhanskoi Gubernii i mery k ego uluchsheniui. Moskovskii Dukhovno-Tsenzurnyi Komitet, Moskva 28 Aprilia 1880.
- Spiro, M. E.  
1955           Acculturation of American Ethnic Groups. American Anthropologist 57:1240-54.
- Strahlenberg, Philipp Johann von  
1730           Vocabularium Calmucko-mungalicum. In Das Nord und Östliche Theil von Europa und Asia. Stockholm.
- Taft, R.  
1953           Shared Frame of Reference Concept Applied to Assimilation of Immigrants. Human Relations VI (1).
- Trailin, F.  
1872           Sanskrin-Kurede. Svedeniia o Donskikh Kalmykakh. St. Petersburg.



- Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet Ministerstva Vnutrennykh Del  
1861 Spiski naselennykh mest Rossiiskoi Imperii II: Astrakhanskaiâ Guberniâ.
- 1864 Spiski naselennykh mest Rossiiskoi Imperii XII: Zemliâ Donskago Voiska.
- 1916 Statisticheskii ezhegodnik Rossii 1915 g.
- Tsentral'noe Statisticheskoe Upravlenie SSSR.  
1929 Vsesoiûznaia perepis naseleniâ 1926 g. T. XVII.
- 1962 Itogi vsesoiûznoi perepisi naseleniâ 1959 g.
- Vladimirtsov, B.  
1932 Mongolo-oiratskii geroicheskii epos.
- 1948 Le Régime Social des Mongols: Le Féodalisme Nomade. Trans. Michel Carsow, Publications du Musée Guimet Bibliothèque d'Études. Tome 52. Paris.
- Vorob'ev  
1903 Astrakhanskii Kalmyki Russkii Antropologicheskii Zhurnal 1903 No. 1:1-32.
- Wagley, Charles and Marvin Harris  
1958 Minorities in the New World: Six Case Studies. New York, Columbia University Press.
- Wu Chu'i-Yu  
1941 Who Were the Oirats. Yenching Journal of Social Studies 3:175-213.
- Zhitetski, I. A.  
1892 Astrakhanskii Kalmyki (Nabliudeniâ i Zametki). Astrakhan.
- 1893 Ocherki byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov: Etnograficheskii Nabliudeniâ 1884-86. Izvestiia Imperatorskago Obshchestva Liubitelei Estestvoznaniâ, Antropologii i Etnografii. Tom LXXVII, Vi. I.
- Zwicky, H. A.  
1851 Grammatik der West-mongolischen, das ist Oirat oder Kalmückischen Sprache. Königsfeld.
- 1853 Das Handwörterbuch der Westmongolischen Sprache.



Case Number 2

Household M

Non-traceable kin relations

Hshld K3	(Phila)	Man is blood brother of 1' father and is next-door neighbor
Hshld L3	(Phila)	Mother of man of hshld had same surname as 1's father but question relationship. Hshld is in category of <u>xudnr</u> to 1's mother's sister
Hshld P2	(Phila)	Man is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1 and is non-traceable <u>zê</u> of 2
Hshld N3	(Phila)	1's mother's father's brother, now dec'd, was married to woman of hshld
Hshld X2	(FA)	Woman is of same <u>yasn</u> as 2 and man was <u>ax'lâchê</u> at 1 and 2 wedding
Hshld G	(FA)	Senior man is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1's mother and woman is <u>naxtsa</u> to 2
Hshld O3	(Phila)	Man is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1
Hshld P3	(Phila)	Man is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1's mother
Hshld A2	(Phila)	Woman is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1
Hshld X3	(Phila)	Woman is <u>yasn-mate</u> of 1

